

A⁷ X. 14. 30

Friendly Conference

Between

MINISTER

AND A

PARISHIONER

Of his, inclining to

QUAKERISM,

Wherein

The absurd Opinions of that

SECT are detected, and expo-

sed to a just Censure.

By a Lover of Truth.

2 Thess. 2. 11.

*For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that
they should believe a lye.*

L O N D O N,

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St. Paul's Church-yard. 1676.



673:03

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A

Friendly Conference,

Between a

Minister, and a Parishioner

Of his,

Inclining to *Quakerism*; Where-
in the absurd Opinions of that *Seet*
are detected, and exposed to a just
Censure.

Minist.



Y good Friend, and
Neighbour; I cannot
but observe an Alte-
ration in your very
Countenance, as if it
did proceed from

some great disturbance in your mind; There-
fore I have sent for you, that if it be in my
power, I may give some ease to your thoughts.
And I hope you will be free with me, and so

B

far

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far open your self, that I may have an opportunity, to expresse the true friendship I bear towards you.

Parish. I thank you for your Charity; I perceive you can read my disturbance in my Face, and seeing you invite me to discover the reasons of it, I will conceal nothing from you.

There are no Temporal Affairs which offer any disquiet to my thoughts: it's nothing of this Life, but what concerns the next, which is the cause of the perplexity, which (I perceive by you) is so visible in me. I must confess that of late, I have read the Books, and frequented the Company of some *Quakers*: and to my Apprehension, they argue strongly. They positively affirm that they are the People of God. You implead them for Cheats and Impostors: If they be in the right, God forbid, that I should be found in any other way: if you be in the right, I am sensible of my danger, if I desert you: for mine own part (if I know mine own thoughts) I have no passion, or interest to gratifie, besides the Salvation of my poor Soul, and gladly would I do for the best, God direct me. If you can convince me that these People walk in any perverse way, I shall soon abandon all communion with them, but if you cannot so do, you must not wonder, that I wholly joyn with them, in the exercise of Religion.

Mir.

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Min. I thank you for your freedom, and commend your serious inclinations, and I wish you well advised in the conduct of them. I must confess that I have been often told, that you have frequented the Company of *Quakers*: and am confirmed in that report by your own confession; yet am not a little pleased, that you are not so far gone, but that you are willing to try the Spirit of *Quakerism*, before you will altogether yield to the Delusions of it. Therefore I pray declare the Grounds of your Dissatisfaction; and so long as you keep within the bounds of your wonted Modesty, and Humility (so rarely to be found amongst those of that Sect) I shall not despair to give you full satisfaction in your most important Scruples.

Par. I am glad that you sent for me, and more glad that I had the good Manners to be ready at your Call: and take it not for flattery if I tell you, that the Respects which I bear to your Person, are most sincere and cordial; therefore shall I the more willingly discover my Disgusts, and the cause of my present Dissatisfaction.

Min. I do in all gratitude accept the Expressions of your Affection, and I beseech you to make no longer Delays, but declare what it is that gives you this Disturbance.

Par. Being upon a certain time, at a *Quakers* Meeting, a Notable Speaker (being there) propounded this to the Consciences of the

B 2

Hearers;

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Hearers ; Whether any among them could affirm, that he had received any Spiritual Advantage by his long frequenting of the *Steeple-houses* ? and bad him , if after enquiry he found no profit by it , further propound this Quæry to himself , *Why am I thus ?* for if God had any regard to the Priests , or their Worship, he would not be wanting to give a Blessing to their Ways, to which (said he) experience shews the contrary. Now comparing what he said, with the Corruptions of mine own heart , the words became a great wound in it, and made me conclude, that all this while I have been in a wrong Box ; and that if the present Ministry were from God, it would have witnessed it self by its efficacy.

Some
Mens not
profiting
under the
present
Ministry,
not char-
geable on
the Mi-
nisters.

Min. Let me tell you here, that it is impossible for you to give any right judgment of the efficacy of any Divine Ordinance by the present apprehension you have of its operation upon you , neither is the goodness or badness of the Ministry , to be measured by the want of a sensible effect upon the hearts of indisposed, and careless Hearers, but from its agreeableness to the Divine Institution , and real tendency to its proper end, the Salvation of Souls. Was *Rachel's* Barrenness imputable unto *Jacob* ? The Sower in *Matt. 13.* sows his seed , and we read of a great miscarriage, but where was the fault ? in the Seed or Soil ? Or was it not in the Enemy who

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who had mingled Tares therewith? *Isaiah* of old complained, that he had *laboured in vain, and spent his strength, for nought, and in vain, Esai. 49. 4.* Did this Confession of his, render him a false Prophet? Or did *Jeremiah's* ill Success in his Ministry, accuse him, and excuse that Rebellious People among whom he exercised it? Many that heard Christ himself received no benefit; witness the Tears he shed over Stiff-necked *Jerusalem*; Must their Non-proficiency blemish the Excellency of his Doctrine? A Man distemper'd in his health, may receive good food, which may turn to unwholesome Humours; Is the meat, or the disorder of his Stomach to be blamed? I wish that some of our most Zealous Separatists, would here consider, that we must not esteem that, most powerful, and profitable, which produceth only Sensible Consolations, working upon the tender Inferiour Faculties of the Soul: whereas the strong grown Christian (such as the *English* Ministry designs to make men) hath his Religion seated in the Rational Powers, and measures not the goodness of the Ministry from those little warmths, heats, and flashes (which Weak Heads admire as Divine Fires) but from its tendency to uniform, through, conscientious Obedience, that is, the performance of all Duty in its Latitude, both to God and Man, together with our selves: Real profit is obedience, and holiness

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of Life ; not Talkativeness, Censoriousness, singularity, some little warmth of affection, or hasty conceits of Gods favour : so that if you state the question right, it will be this ; not whether you have profited by our ministry, but whether you might not have profited, had not the fault been in your selves ? Alas ! it's our hearts grief, that our people should come into the Church, as the beasts into Noah's Ark ; go out beasts, as they came in beasts ; or like unto *Pharaoh's* lean Kine, no fatter for all their feeding. Can you imagine that the Divine justice will charge upon the Ministry the non-proficiency of their people, when the neglect is not in them ? who then so miserable as they ? but that which is the comfort of all good Ministers is, that they must give an account of their labours, but not of the success of them. We are Embassadors for Christ ; now Embassadors are not to be judged by the success of their Embassy, but by their integrity, and a due regard to their Instructions. It will not be ask't us at the great day what souls we have gained, but what faithfulness we have used in our Ministration ; and our reward shall be according to our Labours, and not according to the success of them, as you may be informed from

Κατὰ τὸν 1 Cor. 3. 8. *Every man shall receive his own*
 κερδὺν ἢ *reward according to his own labour.* The dust
 κατὰ τὸν of our feet will condemn such as will not pro-
 κερδῖν. fit by our Doctrine. *Whether they bear or*
 for-

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*forbear, yet shall they know that there hath been
a Prophet among them. Ezek. 2.5. and though
our labour be in vain as to men, yet it is not
in vain in the Lord, who is so righteous, that
he will accept our labour of love, and reward
every man according to his works. Heb. 6.10.*

*Securus
labor quem
nullus po-
test eva-
cuare de-
fectus.
Bern.
conf. lib.
4.*

Par. I cannot reply to the reason of your Arguments: only satisfy me how it comes to pass, that you should pretend to be the Ministers of God, yet acknowledge, that you are sent upon a fruitless errand?

Min. We acknowledge no such thing; for we cannot yield our errand to be fruitless, even to the most obdurate, and impenitent (2 Cor. 2.15, 16.) to whom it is the *savour of death, unto death*, for the glory of Gods revenging justice to those that have rejected his mercy.

Par. Is this all the fruit of your Doctrines?

Min. No, for (blessed be God) we can give a more comfortable account of our Labours then this: For if you, and others have not profited by our Labours, we can instance in those that have; who have given large testimonies of their proficiency, by the exemplary holiness of their lives, and will be one day dreadful witnesses, against the despisers of that Ministry, and the publick ordinances, which those holy Souls so profited by.

Par. It cannot be denied, but that many have frequented those Ordinances (*as you call them*) yet have truly reaped no benefit by

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them ; therefore you cannot but conclude, that they are under a great discouragement, in attending there any longer.

Min. I shall yield to the matter of fact, but not to your placing of the fault. Shall the Divine Ordinances, or those to whose Ministration they are committed, be blamed for the ignorance or negligence of the hearers ?

Par. But if I should grant your Ministry doth some good, yet the Quakers may well despise it, having Teachers of their own, who work far more powerfully upon them.

The Quakers pretensions to the Spirit of God a meer delusion.

Min. If their Speakers did work on their understandings, they would have more knowledge in Religion than most of them have ; if on their memories, they would be able to give a better account of those immethodical and broken discourses afterwards, so that in truth they work only upon their fancy, not by any efficacy of the Matter, or power in the Speaker, but from the misconception of the hearers ; as it was with the followers of *Simon Magus*, who were so wrought upon by certain words

(a) At Rome he was esteemed a God, and had so bewitched the People there, that they erected a Statue to him *Simoni Deo Sancto*. Euseb. Eccl. hist. lib. 2. cap. 13.

(b) Acts 8. 10, 11.

(c) Acts 8. 21.

which he used, that they were in an extasy, and stood amazed, as if they were mad (a), because they believed him to be the mighty Power of God (b), and yet this Simon had no part in the gift of the Holy Ghost (c).

Par. But why do you compare the Speakers to such a reprobate

probate as *Simon Magus*, when as they speak from the heart, and (as the Prophets of old) are much moved in Spirit, when the hand of the Lord is upon them, and is not their Trembling, Sobbing, Sweating, Foaming, &c. visible workings of the Spirit of God?

Min. The Lord came in a still small voice. *1 Kings 19. 2.* But these are more like the workings of another Spirit, *Luke 8. 39.* and you may find the picture of your Speakers drawn by *Virgil* (a Heathen Poet) where he brings in the Sibil possessed with her Dæmon, going to tell *Æneas* his fortune; which since you understand not Latine, I will give it you in English,

*This said, her colour chang'd, nor did her face,
Or comely tresses, keep their former grace,
Her breast doth pant, and from her swelling heart,
A furious rage spreads over every part;
Her voice, and Stature seems to change, when she,
Inspired was, by her kind Deity. (d)*

(d) *Virg.
Æn. 6.*

Thus also when *Montanus* (a branded Heretick) saw any of his party tremble and foam, and fall into these extalies; he would say, behold it is the Lord that moves the hearts of men into extalies (e): Wherefore I would not have you to take all for Gold that glisters; but remember Sathan delights to counterfeit, and can turn himself into an Angel of light (f), and thereby has deceived as

*In nomine
Domini
incipit omne
ne malum;
prov.
(e) Epiph.
adver.
hæres. 48.
lib. 2. 11.*

(f) *2 Cor.
11. 14.*

wife

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wise men as either the Quakers, or their Teachers. I do with St. *John* advise you to try the Spirits, before you trust to them.

Par. I try them, and that by their fruits, and I see they are of good lives, and so cannot be led by an evil Spirit.

Min. You must not be too confident of that inference; for you cannot see their hearts, and Satan doth often connive at the outward Sanctity of false Teachers, to make their Do-

(g) *Epi-
phan. in
heres. 67.
l. 2.*

(h) *idem
in her. 40.
l. 1.*

(i) *Chry-
sost. ad O-
lymp. Ep.
16.*

(k) *Καὶ
τῷ δοκεῖν
αἰσῶνι ἀ-
ναστέφει
τὸ κρείσσιν
ἡχουσιν
ἀνόμων.
Clem. Al. x.
Strom. 4.*

ctrines more taking: thus *Hierax* (g), *Peter* the Anchorite (h), *Pelagius* (i), and many of the old Deceivers lived seemingly very well, but were condemned for their unsound judgment (k.) And if you had judged their Spirit, by their outward conversation, you would have received the most prodigious blasphemies. Whereas our Saviour saith of Hereticks, and false Prophets, *ye shall know them by their fruits, Math. 7. 16.* He means by the fruits and ill consequences of their Doctrines, and not outward conversation; hypocrisy being spun of so fine a thread, that none but the great Searcher of hearts, can distinguish it from sincerity: for even those same false Prophets were such as our Saviour said should come in *Sheeps clothing, that is,* under the disguise of a seeming innocence, whilst within they should be *ravening Wolves.* And if you look narrowly upon the Speakers, many of them make their pretended Holiness, a Cloak for evil designs, and divers of them who

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who have been much admired for a time, have been by the Quakers themselves rejected for arrant cheats. 'Tis observable that Sathans Emissaries, and Factors, have been persons of smooth moral Lives, for otherwise their deeds would destroy their trade: their practises demolish their profession (l). Some of the most Moraliz'd Emperors were the worst Persecutors (m). *Agelius* Bishop of the *Novatians* led *vitam planè Apostolicam*, went barefoot, and used other severities, as do the Papists at this day; from whence we can make no Argument, that their Doctrines are therefore sound.

Par. But why do you complain thus of the Speakers, when Ministers are far worse; And now that you put me upon it, I shall give you the true cause of mens non-proficiency, and indeed separation, which is occasioned by the Scandalous lives of some Ministers, whose behaviour is such, that they become obnoxious to the greatest censure, and have caused both themselves and Doctrines to stink in the Nofirils of the People.

Min. That there are scandalous Ministers in the World, is too sad a truth; and which indeed ought to be lamented in the most brinish tears; But then it ought to be consider'd, that in a settled National Ministry (such as ours is) consisting of great Numbers in Holy Orders, it cannot be expected to be otherwise, but that some men, for a corrupt Interest, will intrude

(l) *Cressy*
(an Apo-
state
from the
Church of
England)
makes the
severities
of the Car-
thusians
one mo-
tive of
his re-
volt.
(m) *Secre-
tes Hist-
Eccl. l. 4.
c. 9.*

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trude themselves into these sacred Offices; which is not to be charged upon our function, since there was a *Judas* among the chosen twelve. But then, as a little blasted Corn makes a great show in a Field, yet when gathered together, will lye in a small Room, so I hope these scandalous Ministers will prove but few, when compared with the number of such, that truly thirst after the Honour of God in a faithful discharge of their Duty.

Par. But are not all Ministers highly to be blamed in their Lives and Conversation?

The efficacy of the Divine Ordinances depends not upon the Worthiness of the Minister.

* 1 Tim. 5.8.

Min. You make that scandalous and faulty which in truth is nothing so. This age is so maliciously wicked, that every seeming fault in a Clergy-man is aggravated to the highest pitch; every Mole-hill is made a Mountain, and every Mote a Beam. Let our actions be never so innocent; a wrong construction is put upon them, to render us odious. If a Clergy-man mannage his outward affairs by Prudential rules, and frees himself from the charge of Infidelity * by caring honestly for his Family; then he is covetous; If he be free and bountiful, then he is Prodigal. If he please not all (*which is impossible*) then he is this, or he is that: You know Christ himself had not every ones good word: different humours will have different sentiments: and if Innocency it self could not escape the lash of Tongues, we must not hope to be free. I pray God, we may so live as to please him:
and

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and then let unruly Tongues wagg, till they be weary.

We are very sensible that there are three sorts of men, who make it their business to scandalize and defame Ministers.

Par. I pray who are they?

Min. You may soon imagine who I mean: First all Atheistical profane wretches, who as well deride Religion it self, as all Religious persons, thinking to hide their shame by reproaching the rule [†] and making those ridiculous who would press them to walk by it. *David* of old said that *the Drunkards made Songs of him*: and it will be thus, as long as Sathan has a Friend that will espouse his interest. Next are the *Papists* who have made it a chief part of their polity, to bring our Clergy under all the contempt they can; and you may imagine for what reason they do it. And lastly the *Quakers* in this respect have outdone them all, and have driven on the design of *Rome*, whetting their Tongues to speak the most Prodigious lies, that is in the power of Malice to invent *. These like *Edom, Ishmael, and Moab*, are all in confederacy against *Israel*, and the most innocent have not escaped the

† *Malunt id esse. Etum quo desiderii sui renuntiare coguntur.*
Lactan. inf. l. 7. c. 1.

* *Non incessimus adversarios, convitiis et contumeliis, Sicut*

plerique faciunt, rationum et Argumentorum infirmitatem maledictis obrepentes. Gregor. Nazianz.

Prima semper irarum tela sunt maledicta, et que non possunt imbecilles, optamus irati. Salvian. Sub. Dei. l. 3.

last

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last of their Serpentine Tongues. *Psal.* 83. 6, 7, 8.

Par. But the main Quæry is behind: you do acknowledge that some Ministers are scandalous; how then is it possible for the people living under such, to receive any profit or edification from them?

Min. Your great mistake lies here, in supposing the efficacy of the Divine Ordinances, to depend upon the worthiness of the persons concerned in the Ministration of them: herein the Quakers are worse than the very Papists and contrary to all the Ancient Fathers*.

* *Non ergo sacerdotis iniquitas effectum impedit Sacramenti, sicut nec infirmitas medici virtutem medicine corrumpit.* Innocen.

virtutem medicine corrumpit. Innocen.

Par. Can you suppose then that an evil man can be a Minister of Christ?

Min. What do you think of *Judas* and *Nicholas* the Deacon? *Solomon* you know fell into the grievous sin of Idolatry, yet for all that we burn not his Books of *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and *Canticles*, but esteem them as inspired Writings. You know that *Noah's* Ark was a Typical representation of the Church of Christ, and it cannot be imagined that *Noah* and his Family could frame so vast a Building in so small a time; therefore we must conclude that several helped to frame that building, which themselves had no benefit of, when

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when the Deluge came. Even so it's possible, that some may be instrumental in the saving of others, by Preaching the Gospel to them, yet themselves receive the doom of *Castaways*, 1 Cor. 9. 27. The truth hereof will further appear from *Phil.* 1. 15. Where St. Paul saith that some preach Christ *even of strife and envy*; then observe ver. 18. *Whether in pretence or truth Christ is preached, I herein do rejoyce and will rejoyce*: Thus it pleased God to bring light out of darkness: I am to look at the Water, and not at the Conduit through which it is convey'd. *We have this treasure in earthen vessels*, saith the Apostle. The reason given is, *that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us*. Pray consult *Acts* 3. 12. where the Apostles St. Peter and St. John forewarn the People from ascribing the Miracles wrought by them *to their power, and holiness*, and refer it wholly to the power of Christ. A good stomach respects the meat without inquiring after the hand that dressed it. The *Scribes and Pharisees* were got into *Moses Chayr*, our Saviour bids not the people, pull them down, but gives them an eternal Document how to behave themselves, when such Teachers fall to their share, (*viz.*) whatsoever they bid them to observe, that to observe and do, but not to do after their works, *Matth.* 23. 3. And you cannot but acknowledge that you have heard many excellent discourses from the Pulpit, pressing your respective duties

The unclean beasts were in the Ark too, and of more kinds than the clean.

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ties both to God and man. And will you tell the Great Judge at the Great day that your non-proficiency, was occasioned by the Scandalous life of your Minister? or will an impudent upbraiding of the Minister with his faults, excuse you in the neglect of your duty?

Par. I must confess that you have given me some satisfaction in this particular: I shall now proceed in the discovery of my other scruples.

Min. I shall not despair (with the Divine assistance) but to give you equal satisfaction in your remaining doubts; and your ingenuity gives me large hopes of diverting you from that erroneous way, to which you have too long inclined. Therefore I pray, mention your objections.

Par. I must confess (*with some regret*) I have not left my old custom of saying (*You*) though I speak to a single person, in this respect the Quakers seem to have the advantage of those, that differ from them.

(*You*) to a single person vindicated. *Min.* I pray resolve me this question; whether Religion suffer by saying (*You*) when we address our selves to a single person? if it do, declare wherein, if it do not, why do you trouble your own and other mens Consciences in a butinefs wherein Religion is no ways concerned?

Par. But is it not more proper to say (*Thou*) then (*You*) to a single person.

Min.

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Min. If propriety of Speech be the thing, you had best challenge School-Masters and Grammarians to dispute the point (some of which do very learnedly defend the use of (*you*) to a single person) * and not trouble mens Consciences in a case where they are not concerned. And here let me tell you, that the *Pharisees* were not more guilty of Superstition, in the washing of their Pots and Cups, than the *Quakers* are in this very thing, and other niceties of this nature: who while in other things they de-claim so much against our Forms, and Ceremonies, do herein betray the greatest Formality imaginable. But seeing you stand upon the propriety of the thing, let me tell you, that Usage gives the stamp to Speech, and Custome is the only Law, to make words, or phrases, proper, or improper.

* Walker's
Part. p.
460.
Wallis
Gram. lin.
Ang. p. 8. :

Par. But what do you say to that Argument which you will find printed in one of the *Quaker's* Books, that God *Thou'd* Adam, and Adam *Thou'd* God?

Min. Do you suppose that God and Adam discoursed together in *English*? If the Translators had used *You* for *Thou*, 'this shadow of an Objection had disappeared.

Par. But why do you say *You* to one man and *Thou* to another?

Min. The reason is, that custome has so far prevailed that sometimes we say *Thou* to express a familiarity; to another *You* to signify a civil respect.

C

Pars

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Par. Now you speak out, and here let me tell you that the *Quakers* will triumph in the advantage you have given them, for when you address your selves to God, you say (*Thou*) when to men, you say (*You*) the consequence of all is, that you give more respect to man, than God.

Min. The *Quakers* will find that they have no occasion to triumph; no other intimation of respect being appropriated to *You* or *Thou*, or any other words, but what they have by custome, and common usage, which in the present case hath taught us to use the word *Thou* in a different sense, in Temporal and Spiritual relations: and thus it's only in Civil matters that we say (*You*) to a single person: but in Religious Offices we say (*Thou*) to the greatest Personages on earth, as will appear by consulting the Offices of our Church. Whosoever is to be Baptized, the Form of words run thus, N. *I baptize thee, &c.* And you may observe the same, in the Communion Service, in Matrimony, and so in all other Religious Offices.

Par. But while you make use of the term *Thou* in Religious Offices, why are you not as much bound to use it in Civil communication?

Min. We suppose the use of (*You*) or (*Thou*) to be a matter in it self wholly indifferent; and morally neither good, nor evil,

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vil, and therefore no matter of Conscience, nor just occasion of Scruple; but a thing imputable to innocent custome, which until you can prove sinful, or unlawful, or any where in Scripture prohibited, see, how you can clear your selves of the guilt of Superstition, Pharisaism, *by laying heavy burdens* upon the Consciences of men, when indeed God has left them at liberty.

Par. But the issue of the point will be here; whether it's lawful to give any Civil respects to the persons of men?

Min. If that be all, I am ready to prove, that it is not only lawful but our duty, which I shall make good, if my arguments from Scripture-evidence, will be allowed. Civil Titles lawful.

Par. I would have you to know, that though I approve of some *Quakers*, yet not of those who set up the Notions of their own brains, above the authority of the Sacred Scriptures; I shall be as ready to keep to the Scripture rule, as your self.

Min. What then do you think of these Texts (and many more which I could name, of the like importance.) *Honour to whom honour is due, Rom. 13. 7. In honour preferring one another, Rom. 12. 10. Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, 1 Tim. 5. 17. And honour all men, 1 Pet. 2. 17.*

Par. I should be convinc'd by these Texts, if other Scriptures did not contradict the

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sense, which you put upon them.

Min. Name those Scriptures.

Par. I begin with that in *Acts* 10. 34. *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons*; which Text I understand thus; that from God Almighty's Example, we are not to give any outward respects to the persons of men.

Min. That you put a false interpretation upon these words, will evidently appear, if you thoroughly consult the foregoing passages of that Chapter; especially if you call to mind, what the vision of the Sheet to *St. Peter*, and the vision of an Angel to *Cornelius*, did truly import: the sense of the Text under debate appearing to be no more than this; that the Partition Wall is now to be broken down, and that the Gospel is Catholick, that is, of an universal concern, not to be confin'd within the narrow limits of one Nation or people; but like the Sun in the Firmament which shines on all. No matter now where our Country is, who were our Progenitors, or what our present circumstances are, as to the flesh: for God hath no respect to our personal capacities, whether we be *Jew* or *Gentile*, Bond or Free, Rich or Poor, Noble or Ignoble, *in reference to our salvation*: The qualifications he now looks at, is *fearing him, and working righteousness*, and then we need not fear but to be *accepted of him*. This will now tell you what is meant by

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by respecting persons in *St. Peter's* notion, and you will find the like case in *Rom. 2. 11.* *for there is no respect of persons with God.*

What is there meant by respecting persons in *St. Paul's* sense, the foregoing Verse will inform you, *But glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.*

Par. But suppose these words do wholly relate to the Calling in of the *Gentiles*: yet the four first verses of *2 Jam.* will come home to my purpose; the words are these, *My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons; for if there come a man into your assemblies, with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come a poor man in vile raiment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay cloathing, and not to the poor, &c. Are not you then partial in your selves, and become judges of evil thoughts? &c.* Which sufficiently imply'd all outward regard or civil respects to the persons of men.

Min. The Apostle here forbids not Civil respects, but such sort of respects only, as did violate justice in their publick Consistories, when the gaiety and outward splendour of the Rich tempted them to partiality; and to give such a sentence, as agreed not with the merit of the cause, and this is answerable to that in *Deut. 1. 17.* *Thou shalt not have respect of persons in judgment.*

C 3

Par.

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Par. Do you suppose then that (*Assemblies*) here signifie places of judgment ?

Min. This Supposition will appear to be well grounded, when we consider that the *Jews* had a Law, whereby it was provided that when a Rich man and a Poor had a suit together in their Courts of Judicature, either both must Sit, or both Stand in the same rank, to avoid all marks of partiality. To the terms of which law the Apostle here has reference.

Par. But is it not a more agreeable interpretation to say, that the Apostle by *Assemblies* means all Civil Meetings whatsoever ? that when Christians meet at a Feast, or in any place, on whatsoever occasion, they should shew no civil respect whatsoever, to one more than another ?

Min. This cannot be his meaning, because he then had contradicted what his Lord and Master had plainly allowed, in *Luk. 14. 8, 9, 10.* *When thou art bidden of any man to a Wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him: and he that bad thee, and him, come and say to thee, give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room, that when he that bad thee cometh, he may say unto thee, friend go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of all that sit at meat with thee.*

Where

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Where difference and degrees of honour and place are evidently allowed by our Saviour, plainly intimating, that as one place is higher than another, so some persons are more honourable than others; and as Divine worship is only due to God, so Civil worship or respect, is due to man; yea and to one man more than another.

Par. But what do you say to that plain precept of Christs, *Mat. 23. 10. Neither be ye called Master: for one is your Master even Christ?*

Min. Pray answer me this Query, did Christ's command there, relate to Spiritual, or Temporal matters?

Par. I suppose it did relate to Spiritual affairs; for his Kingdom not being of this world, we cannot suppose that he gave any temporal laws for the outward government of it.

Min. If his commands did extend only to Spirituals, why then do *Quakers* apply them to Temporals, such as civil honour and civil titles are? but I pray resolve me, whether a civil and natural title be not necessary to express a civil and natural relation?

Par. What do you mean?

Min. My meaning is plain: do you allow your Servant to call you Master, or your Child to call you Father?

Par. Should I not allow them so to do,

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they would have no other term of relation, to call me by.

Min. Now you have confuted your self.

Par. Wherein?

Min. In allowing your Child to call you Father, and your Servant Master.

Par. Possibly I have been faulty in suffering my Servants to call me Master.

Min. You are as faulty to suffer your Children to call you Father.

Par. How do you make that good?

Min. With ease: for in the same notion that we are forbidden to call Master, we are also forbidden to call Father: for in the foregoing verse of the Text objected it's said, *Call no man Father upon earth.* So then the *Quakers* bring this Tenent to this strange result, that a child must honour his father, but must not call him father, that a Servant must obey his Master, but must not call him Master. And had our Saviours command agreed with the *Quakers* interpretation of it, then had *St. Stephen* and *St. Paul* been highly reproveable when both begun their Speeches at *Jerusalem* in these words, *Men, Brethren, and Fathers, &c. Acts 7.2. & 22.1.* Was it not strange that they should use the term of Fathers, when Christ saith, *Call no man Father*, and as highly reproveable for enjoining Servants to obey their Masters, when Christ had said, *Call no man master, &c.* as if the Gospel continued the Duty to Parents

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rents and Masters, yet forbad the Title. 1
Tim. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Eph. Chap. 6. Col. Chap.

4.

Par. But if our Lord condemns not all civil Titles, what then do these words mean?

Min. For your satisfaction herein : you must know that the Scribes and Pharisees had so far incroacht upon Christs Prophetick and Regal offices, that they had usurped an absolute Authority, and Dominion over the Faith and Consciences of men ; imposing the traditions and inventions of their own Brains as so many absolute Laws in the Church of God, and not only so, but assumed Titles answerable to those usurpations which were [*Rabbi*] [*Father*] and [*Master*] and some of these great *dumure cheats* were as Lordly in their *Sanhedrim*, as the *Roman Bishop* in the Conclave, or as *George Fox* is said to be at *Devonshire house*. Now it was this Spiritual Tyranny and Arrogancy of the Scribes and Pharisees which our Saviour condemns in these Titles, and no Civil Titles whatsoever. The sense of the Text under debate, will presently appear, if the Apostles distinction in *Heb. 12. 9.* be admitted ; where he mentions Fathers after the flesh to whom we owe Reverence and Obedience in all things which concern the flesh ; and a Father after the Spirit to whom we are subject in all things which concern the Spirit : For of our
Souls,

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Bp. San-
derfon.

*Dixit hoc
Jesus, non
ut odio ha-
beremus
patres, sed
ne à patri-
bus & ma-
tribus, ad
alterius fi-
dei imperi-
um subdu-
camur.* E-
piphan.
adv.
Mart.
l. i. Tom.
3:

Souls, Spirits, and Consciences, as we can have no Father, so we can have no Master upon Earth. So that we must not ambitiously affect such arrogant Titles our selves, nor give them to others in the Pharisees sense, viz. as a testimony of our implicate faith in them, or of their absolute dominion over our Consciences, for in this sense God only is to be called, and accounted our Father and Master.

Par. I will but desire your resolution in another Scripture which seems to forbid all outward respect to man; it's in *Luke 10. v. 4. Salute no man by the way.*

Min. Do you suppose that Text is taken in a literal sense?

Par. I suppose it is.

Min. Then the *Quakers* are faulty, in ever making use of a purse, and highly to be blamed, because they go not always bare-foot; the whole verse running thus, *carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes, and salute no man by the way.*

Par. What then is the meaning of that Text?

Min. You must know that when our Lord had commissioned the Seventy to preach the Gospel to several particular Cities, that they might give him a speedy account of their success, he saith, *Salute no man by the way*: as much as if he had said, your present commission requires a speedy

exc-

execution, and the hast thereof is such that you cannot now perform such offices of Friendship, as at other times you may: because at this time they will prove an impediment to the present Ministry*.

Par. What reason have you to suppose that this command had a reference only to that particular juncture?

Min. Because our Saviour elsewhere saith, *when you come into a house salute it*, *Matth. 10. 12.* and *Rom. 16.* seems to be almost wholly composed of Salutations as you may see at large. See also *Phil. 4. 21.* *1 Cor. 16. 19.* *2 Cor. 13. 13.* To all this I may add the reason of the thing, which will render the objection more frivolous: for a salutation is only an outward testification of love and affection. And can any be so senseless as to suppose the Religion of love forbids your Characters and expressions of it? the usage is Christian and commendable, consisting of Prayers and well-wishes to those we meet, and is a testification of our reverence to the Image of God, wheresoever we do meet with it, and of our respect to humane nature.

And for your further confirmation I have this to add, that the practice of the Saints herein, do's sufficiently vindicate the lawfulness of the thing. I begin with *Jacobs* demeanour towards his Brother *Esau*, recorded *Gen. 33.* Where you will find that
Jacob

* *Signum erat festinationis, ut 2 Reg. 14. 29. apud Orientales enim istae salutationes, variis flexionibus, osculis, amplexibus, percussationibus et bonis omnibus, peraguntur.*
Grot. in Luk. 10. 6.

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Jacob calls himself no less then five times his Servant, and called *Eſau* eight times his Lord, and when they met bowed seven times before him: which Civility and manners, in all probability he learned from his Grand-Father *Abraham*, of whom we read that *he bowed down himself to the Children of the land*, *Gen. 23. 12.* When *Eli* reproved *Hannah* supposing she had been drunk, the mistake whereof might have provoked her being Innocent, yet she made no passionate reply: but said, *no my Lord, for I am a woman of a sorrowful Spirit*, *1 Sam. 2. 15.* Pray observe with what civility *Mephibosheth* congratulates *David's* return, at every address, it is, *My Lord the King, let him take all, for as much as my Lord the King is returned in peace*, *2 Sam. 19. 30.* Next I will shew you that there is the same strain along in the new Testament. *St. Luke* dedicating his Gospel to *Theophilus*, salutes him with the Title of *most excellent Theophilus*, *Chap. 1. 3.* The Apostles *Barnabas* and *Paul* cryed among the People, *Sirs, why do ye these things?* *Acts. 14. 15.* Though *Festus* was a Heathen, yet *St. Paul* addresses himself to him with the Title of *most noble Festus*, *Acts. 25. 26.* and he no ways abridgeth *Agrippa* of his Royal Titles, but calls him *King Agrippa*: and *St. John* in his second Epistle writes to the *elect Lady*: and *St. Peter* commends *Sarah* not only for obeying *Abra-*

Abraham, but also for calling him *Lord*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 6. And there is one thing more which is to me very remarkable, that *Friendship* is a great Moral and Christian duty : but then take *Friend*, as it is a civil Title, and we shall find that our blessed Saviour gives it even to that infamous Traitor *Judas*, *Matth.* 27. 50. *Friend wherefore art thou come ?*

Par. I thank you for the satisfaction that you have given me herein, and if you please I will go on to propound my next scruple.

You expect that all good Christians should joyn in Communion with you ; and what reason have they so to do : when in your Service-book you confess your selves not only Sinners, but *Miserable Sinners*, and would you have us joyn with sinners ?

Min. To put a speedy end to this debate, pray resolve me whether you own Confession of sin to be the duty of every humble penitent ?

Par. It's yielded that Confession of sin is a duty because enjoined by these Scriptures, *Psal.* 33. 18. *Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him : upon them that hope in his mercy.* 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* *Mat.* 3. 6. *and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.*

Min. Then the sum of your accusation lies

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lies here, that we live in the practise of a known duty.

Par. I must confess that I took up this argument too hastily from one *Levingston*: but I pray resolve me, whether the publick form of Confession be not contradictory to that Evangelical Doctrine of an unsinning state of perfection even in this life?

Min. If Confession of sin be a Christian duty (as all who own the Scriptures must acknowledg) then are we not only innocent in the practise of it, but consequently the *Quakers* notion of Perfection is utterly false.

Par. Do you then deny the Doctrine of Perfection?

Of the
Doctrine
of Per-
fection.

Min. We deny not the Doctrine of Perfection, but such a notion as the *Quakers* have thereof, calling it an unlinning state.

Par. I think it will be no hard task to prove that this assertion has not only the stamp of a Divine authority upon it; but that in the practise of it the Saints in this life have attained to it.

Min. Make but either good and I shall be satisfied.

Par. As to the proof of the Doctrine, I shall not need to spend either my time or yours, in multiplying allegations; one clear Text will be enough, and such a Text you will find, *Mat. 5. 48. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

fect. Where you have not only a precept but a pattern from God himself; shewing that the perfection there required is an unsinning perfection. Then as for the practise of this precept we read in Scripture the Examples of *Noah* and *Job*, that they were perfect; and of *David* above both, that he was a man *after Gods own heart.*

Min. The Text and the instances which you have produced in favour of this opinion, will signify nothing to our present case. To every particular whereof I will answer when I have told you, that this Doctrine of perfection was first broached by the grand Heretick *Pelagius* whose Opinion and Arguments the *Quakers* have stoln; but it was condemned by the Ancient Christians in several Councils, and also confuted by the excellent Pens of *St. Hierom*, *St. Augustine*, and *Orosius*, who all lived when it first appeared in the World. And it will be little to your credit to lick up the vomit of such as *Pelagius*, and oppose the Doctrine of the Fathers. But to go on to your Arguments. I begin with the Text, *be ye perfect*, &c. in which words, our Lord aims only, from God Almighty's example to press Charity and Mercy to the highest degree: and this will evidently appear from the context. Begin therefore with the 43 *verse* and so on, where you will find that our Saviour pressing the duty of Charity and Mercy, urgeth its

They outgo the Cathari a branch of the Novatians. *Enseb. hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 42.* who were excommunicated by a Synod of 60 Bishops besides Presbyters, Deacons, and the Pastors of other Provinces.

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its extent not only to Friends, but also to Enemies: For should Christianity oblige our Charity no further than to Friends, the civility of Heathens would vie perfection with it; the Philosophers of old having taught that in their Schools of Morality; but to love Enemies is the perfection of Charity, a Law peculiar to Christianity. *Be perfect, that is, love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. Be perfect even as your Father is perfect, who having commanded you to love your Enemies doth himself give you an Example for your imitation, for he maketh his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth Rain on the just, and on the unjust.* And that this is that our Saviour principally intends by this precept, will be clear from all contradiction, if we observe how St. Luke pens this very Sermon on the Mount. You will find these passages in *Luke 6.* beginning at *vers. 27. love your Enemies, do good to them which hate you, &c.* and instead of concluding in St. *Matthews* expression, *be ye perfect, &c.* his words are, *be ye merciful even as your Father is merciful, ver. 36.*

Par. I should be very much convinc'd with your reasons but for the clause of the Text, which you take no notice of: where God Almighty's example is propounded to us for our imitation. And here I may add

add another Text of the like importance, 1 Pet. 1. 16. intimating that we are commanded to be holy *as he is holy*, and if we could not be unsinningly perfect and holy, in vain is the precept propounded to us.

Min. Could you rightly distinguish between equality and similitude, your objection would disappear in a moment. For you must know that it is one thing to be perfect after the measure of Divine perfection and Holiness; and another thing to be so, after the manner and nature of it: after the measure, is impossible; shall the creature measure Perfections with the Creator? the very Angels themselves are in his sight comparatively impure. And shall degenerate man vie perfections with the Divine Majesty? a presumption which brought *Lucifer* from his station to what he is. But though we cannot Equal, yet we may Imitate the Divine perfections, which is the only import of the Text. Take this familiar instance to express my meaning by. A Writing Master sets his Scholar a Copy, with a charge to imitate it: you must only construe his meaning to be such, that he must frame his letters according to the form of those Characters, which are set before him; and not that he expects he should write according to the perfection of the Copy. So when our Lord saith, *be ye perfect even as your Father is perfect*, the words cannot be so understood

The quality though not the quantity; the sort and kind, though not the degree.

derstood as that it were possible for us, or that we were obliged to arrive to the perfection of the Divine Nature; but to be imitators of him, to write after his Copy, and to follow him as the true pattern of goodness and mercy: therefore he tells us, *Joh. 13. 15. that he hath given us an example to do as he hath done, that is, to purify our selves, as he is pure,* *1 Joh. 3. 3. to walk as he walked, and to be holy in all manner of conversation* because he was so. And it is good to set the mark as high as may be, so that we may be excited to endeavour nobly; for as one wittily observed,* He that aims at the Moon, though he do not reach the mark, shall shoot higher than he that levels only at the top of a Tree.

* Dr. Tho.
Fuller.

Par. But what do you say to those instances I gave you of *Noah, Job, and David*?

Min. I am now ready to give you a reply to them: I begin with *Noah*; and do confess that the Spirit of God gives this great character of him, that *he was just and perfect in his generation, and that he walked with God, Gen. 6. 9.* but the question is, whether that perfection attributed to him, did signify such a state, as rendered him free from all sin?

Par. It is necessarily implied: for how can he be said to be perfect who is subject to sin?

Min.

Min. Now I will shew you from this very instance which the *Quakers* use to prove perfection by, according to their notion of it, that it overthrows the tenent which they think to establish by it, and that by comparing it with *Gen. 9. 20, 21.* where we read that *Noah was drunk & uncovered in his Tent.*

It may be added that some of great note, do expound, *perfect in his generation*, to be meant comparatively, that is, in respect of the men of that Age.† A generation like that

† *Ætate quidem sua fuit justus, at fortasse non tempore Abrahami ita.* Hieron. trad. Hebr.

Noah non erat ut oportuit nisi per gratiam. Ber. R. 29.

* *Salvian de gubern. Dei lib. 6.*

in which *St. Salvian* * lived, wherein it was accounted a great degree of holiness to be less vicious.

Your next instance is of *Job*, of whom the Scripture saith that *he was perfect and upright*, and that, *he feared God and eschewed evil*, *Job 1. 1.* Uprightness there explains perfection; a perfect man he was, that is, upright, sincere, a fearer of God and lover of him. Yet notwithstanding this character that was given, he had his failings, accordingly he makes confession, *Chap. 7. 20. I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?* See also *Chap. 4. 34. and 42. 6. And Job answered the*

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Lord and said, behold I am vile.

And for your last instance of David : you cannot be ignorant (though he was *a man after Gods own heart*) that he fell into the hainous sins of Adultery and Murder, and besides the 51 Psalm which he composed upon that sad occasion, he penned other penitential Psalms and Prayers for the pardon of his sins, which would be strange to ask if he were altogether free from them. So that the *Quakers* might as well write against those Psalms, as against the confession in our Service Book.

Par. If perfection signify not such a state, as supposeth us absolutely free from all sin, what then doth it signify ?

Min. As perfection is attributed to the Saints in this life, it generally signifies no more than sincerity, and uprightness, a serving God with a single heart, without Hypocrisy and Guile : and this you will find in such Bibles as have Marginal notes in them ; *perfect* in *Gen. 6.9.* is noted upright, and in *Gen. 17. 1.* upright and sincere ; and by observation you may find the like in more places : for the word in the Original might as well be translated upright, as perfect. See *Dauids* last advice to his Son, *1 Chron. 28.9.* *And thou Solomon my son know thou the God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart :* That sincerity is there meant by a perfect heart, will appear in the following

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lowing words, *for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts*: that is, he sees into the bottom of our hearts whether they be sincere or no.

Par. But what do you say to this text ? *Phil. 3. 15. Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded.*

Min. Compare it with the 12th verse, where it is said, *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.* Make a right inference from the Text compared, and you will find the mistake.

Par. Do you suppose the Apostle contradicts himself?

Min. The Apostles words are justifiable from any contradiction allowing the right construction which ought to be put upon them: by *perfect*, in the Text objected he means no more than sincerity in his Christian course: by *perfect* in the 12 verse, a fulness of Grace, together with the reward of it, which is not to be had but in a state of Glory and Immortality.

Par. How doth that appear to be his sense?

Min. Very plainly from the 11 verse, *if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead* (then follows) *not as though I had attained, either were already perfect*; intimating that he could not be fully perfect till he had attained the Resurrection of

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the dead, where you may observe, that the sense we give of perfection is agreeable to *St. Pauls* sense of it, but yours contradictory to it.

Par. If these Scriptures already named do not prove an unlinning perfection : yet that of, *1 Joh. 5. 18. We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not*, will put this question out of all doubt.

Min. That the *Quakers* have a wrong notion of this Scripture, I hope to make evident to the meanest capacity ; but before I proceed , will you allow me this fundamental truth, that the Holy Scriptures do no where contradict themselves ?

Par. God forbid, that such a thought should enter into me, that the infallible Spirit, by which the Scriptures were written, can contradict himself.

Min. This being granted, the Text under our debate cannot be interpreted to signify, that any in this life hath gotten an absolute conquest over all sin, and that for two reasons.

First, because *St. John* here would contradict other plain Texts, as *1 Kings 8. 46. for there is no man that sinneth not : Prov. 20. 9, who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin ? Rom. 3. 23, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. See Ezek. 18. 24. Eccl. 7. 20. 2 Chron. 6. 36. Job. 9. 20. Jam 3. 2. Gal. 3. 22.*

Secondly,

Secondly, because St. *John* would not only contradict others, but himself also, having plainly said, 1 *Job*. 1. 8. *if we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us*: to all which let me add, that it would be otherwise strange that our Lord should teach his Disciples to pray, as often for the forgiveness of their sins, as for their daily bread; whilst that we must suppose that when they so prayed, they had no Trespases to forgive, which very instance being inconsistent, is enough to answer the objection.

Par. What then do these words really mean?

Min. The meaning of the words is this, 1. he sinneth not that sin unto *death*, ver. 16. by some expounded to be the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. Nor 2. doth he live in a wilful course and trade of sin, 1 *Job*. 3. 9. he makes not sin his business, he works not in it as a man doth in his trade, which is the true sense of the Greek word in the Text: and that is the reason why wicked men are called in Scripture *workers of iniquity*, because they do follow it as their business; while sins of weakness and Infirmary (which he daily strives and prays against) are notwithstanding consistent with a regenerate Estate.

ὁ μὴ ἀμαρτάνων.

Operarii iniquitatis. Ut jugulens homines surgunt de nocte latrones.
Hor.

Par. But is there not one clause in the Text you mentioned, which contradicts the sense

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you have given of it? wherein we read that he that is born of God, cannot sin, whereof you have this reason given, *because he is born of God.*

Min. The objection will soon be answered by considering what the Apostle means by the *seed of God*, which is a new firm Principle of Grace, and Holiness, wrought in him by the Spirit of God, by which he is kept from habits of wilful and deliberate sins; and thus he cannot sin: not through any Natural, but Moral impossibility, I say: he Morally cannot do so, the powers of his Soul being acted and inflamed by such a Divine Principle of Grace and goodness, as will not suffer him to live in any known sin whatsoever. If he does; he falls from that Holiness, and forfeits the Divine relation, and can no longer be said to be born of God, no more than he that has carried the repute of an honest man, can after wilful breaches of Justice, and Honesty, challenge that worthy Title.

*Id tantum
possumus
quod jure
possumus.*

*Quisquis se
in culpa
tum dixerit,
aut super-
perbus
est, aut
fiultus.
Cypr. de
oper. &
elem.*

Who can be so confident to say that he is free from all the Infirmities of his Nature? Who dare say that he never speaks, thinks, or acts amiss? he that saith he cannot fall by Errour, is already slain by pride; and he that saith he cannot sin, sins even in saying so: it's true a good man makes not sin his work, and he sins not so as to be lyable to that dismal sentence, *Depart from me ye work-*

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workers of iniquity, Mat. 7. 23.

Par. But the *Quakers* will tell you, that denying perfection in their notion of it, you give encouragement to sin.

Min. If you examine the case truly, you will find the quite contrary, that the charge will fall upon themselves. Pray, who is your Friend, he that saith you have no Enemy, or he that informs you where he lurks? when the Devil perswades man that he is clean and free, a considerable part of his work is done; there is small hopes of that mans conversion, who thinks himself well enough already; it's one step to conversion, to see our selves unconverted; and one step to happiness, to perceive that we are miserable, *ay, even miserable sinners*: he is besotted with his condition that mistakes his Prison for a Palace; I need not guard my House, when I am sure that no Thieves can enter in: it's vain to offer him Physick, who concludes himself well; or to sue for redemption, when free from thralldom. *Math. 9. 12.* But if on the other hand I find my self weak, then I lay hold on him that is strong; from a sense of my infirmities I seek after help. If I find many Enemies, I prepare against them. If I be thoroughly convinc'd that I am beset round with temptations and such stratagems as are under the conduct of such a powerful and Politick Enemy as the Devil is with-

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without me ; and to compleat my misery, that I have a false and treacherous heart within me ; being in those sad circumstances, I see the necessity of a Saviour, set my watch, and fly from the confidence of flesh, to the protection of an Almighty arm.

Par. I shall not yield the cause till you have more fully clear'd the point : consult *Eph. 5.5.* *Rev. 21.27*, from whence we may learn that no unclean thing can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: which implies a necessity of an unfinning state even in this life, & that in order to our happiness in the next.

Min. I shall not need to spend much time in refutation of your mistakes in these Scriptures ; do but duly consult them, and the best commentators on them, and you will find they import no more, than that no unregenerate, and un sanctified person shall have any share in bliss and happiness.

Par. I will give you one Argument more for perfection (as it is taught by the *Quakers*) and then I have named all I have, that are of any moment ; by denying perfection, a fundamental in Divinity is overthrown (*viz.*) that the second *Adam* has gain'd what the first *Adam* lost.

Min. You cannot think that the first *Adam* had a state of such perfection, as to make it impossible for him to sin, for you know, he did actually fall ; such a perfection he never lost, nor did Christ gain such a
state

state for us in this World: We are indeed by Christ, and the grace of God put into such a State, as that we may perform that which is necessary to our Salvation under the Covenant of Grace, even that which God will accept of, through his mercy; that is, we may please God, considering what he now expects, and accepts through Christ, as well as *Adam* could, considering what God required then. But if you will stretch this sentence to be meant of an equal perfection, to *Adam's* in this life, you discover gross Ignorance in the mis-timing that fundamental of yours which you are not to apply to this present mortal state, but to the life to come: here we have but the earnest and first fruits of the Spirit, *Rom. 5. 23. 2 Cor. 1. 22. Eph. 1. 14*, therefore it is that, *here we know but in part, and Prophecy but in part, 1 Cor. 13. 9*. The state of Grace here is gradual. We grow by little and little, *but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, ver. 10*. Then mind *ver. 12*. For now (that is in this life) *we see through a glass darkly, but then* (that is in the life to come) *face to face*. Seeing God face to face cannot be here, *for we cannot see the face of God and live, Exod. 33. 20*. for *here we walk by faith not by sight, 2 Cor. 5. 7*. and it's only in the life to come that we must expect the fruition of the beatifical vision, *1 Job. 3. 2*. But that I may bring

bring this subject to a conclusion, give me leave to add, that to argue a state here free from sin, is to argue against matter of fact, and the clearest conviction and experience; for we read of failings in the best of men, and have not such their shares of troubles and vexations in this life? They suffer hunger, and cold, needs and necessities, the tormenting diseases, and anguishes of the body: and at last yield up the Ghost to Death it self.

Par. What do you infer from hence?

Min. That Christians are not reinstated in this life in the outward part or appendages of that perfection which *Adam* lost; that is, not in a painless, secure, immortal state. All the miseries we suffer here are but the dire effects and consequents of sin; will you say then that the cause is taken away, and the effects remain? This impleads the Divine justice, that some should feel the punishment of sin, whilst they are not concerned in the guilt of it; *And shall not the judg of all the earth do right?*

Gen. 18.
25.

Par. If to be acquainted with sorrow, grief, sickness, diseases and death, be nothing but the effects of sin: how shall our Saviour who suffered them all, be himself free from the imputation of it?

Min. Those sorrows were the effects of our sins, which he in compassion to us, took voluntarily upon himself; it was *our sins*, which he bare upon his own body; And taking

1 Pet. 2.
24.

king upon himself our sorrows and infirmities, *he thereby became a more merciful high Priest*; For death entred by sin; so consequently no sin, no death, nor any of its sad attendants. We free Christ from the commission of sin, not from the imputation of it; and we confess, sin was the occasion of our Saviours sufferings; but it was our sin, not his own. He offered himself to suffer all the miseries of life and death, which we had deserved; and it was as just in God to inflict them on him, as it is in a Creditor to make the Bonds-man, who is able and willing, to pay the debt of an indigent Bankrupt: And thus Christs sufferings do still more strongly prove, they are the just desert of sin; since even a surety for sinners cannot escape them.

Par. The satisfaction which you have given me, invites me to give you some further trouble, in the resolution of my remaining doubts.

You cannot be ignorant how the *Quakers* fasten the charge of *Pharisaism* upon the Clergy, in having their Pulpits exalted; and do they not herein manifest an horrible pride, and come within the lash of that reproof of our Saviour? *Mark 12.38,39. Beware of the Scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love Salutations in the Market-places, and the chief Seats in the Synagogues.*

Heb. 2.
17: 18.
Isa. 53. 4.
He hath
born our
griefs, and
carried
our sor-
rows.

The same
a Fanati-
cal Wo-
man at
Geneva
objected
against
Min. Calvin.

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Min. What our Lord condemned in the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, was their pride in chusing the high places in the Synagogues, in a vain presumption that they exceeded all men in Learning and Holiness : herein the *Quakers* discover not our pride, but their own Ignorance ; for it is not for preeminence, that we use our Pulpits, but for convenience ; not that our persons, but that our voices may be exalted : and herein we aim not at glory to our selves, but edification to our People : and this is according to the example of *Ezra*, *Neb.* 8. 4. who did erect a Pulpit of wood, not in obedience to the Ceremonial Law, because it was no where commanded by it, but that he might stand above the People, that he might be the better heard, while he interpreted the Law to them. But I beseech you let us not so far humour the *Quakers*, as to take notice of all their idle impertinencies, and cavils ; but if you have any thing of moment to object against us, I am ready to give a reply to it ; and further to engage you to give credit and attention to what I say, I profess to you that I have not spoke any thing hitherto, but what I am perswaded in my Conscience, is agreeable to sacred truth, and I hope you will believe me without an Oath.

Par. An Oath would be so far from giving me any assurance of your sincerity, that I should for that be the rather moved
to

to question it: for what more expressly forbidden than swearing? what so contradictory to that sacred truth you profess to own? I have not much convers'd with Books, but I have heard that the primitive Christians, whose Piety was approv'd (as Gold) in the Furnace of a dreadful persecution, practis'd such an honest and ingenuous simplicity, to that exactness and accuracy, that they accounted it a disparagement to be put to an Oath. But seeing you hold the lawfulness of it, I hope you will prove it out of Scripture; and if you can make it in any case a Duty, and an act of Religion, I shall then change my Opinion of this generation, which I esteemed most impious, and on the contrary, think it very Religious through the multitude of Oaths that are so frequently in it.

Min. Pray tell me how the *Quakers* instruct you concerning an Oath?

Par. That I shall do presently out of a Book I lately met with, intitl'd *Antichristianism reprov'd*, written by *Rich. Hubberthorn*, in answer to a Book of *Mr. Tombs*, who it seems did vindicate the lawfulness of an Oath (lawfully administred;) wherein *Hubberthorn* endeavours to make it out, that all Oaths are utterly unlawful by Christ's command; and therefore all such as do vindicate them, are guilty of the charge of *Antichristianism*.

Min.

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Min. Before I proceed in this Controversy, you must tell me whether or no Oaths were ever lawful ?

Par. *Hubberthorn* will answer you, for his words imply that they were. Therefore he tells *Mr. Tombs* that he failed in his instances of *Abraham, Isaac, David*, and others swearing, for they lived under the first Covenant.

Min. If *Hubberthorn* by the first Covenant means the Covenant of works, he shews a great deal of Ignorance and folly, in saying that *Abraham* and others after him lived under that Covenant. And therefore before I proceed any further upon this discourse concerning Oaths, I shall make a digression to unfold, this necessary point of Religion about the nature of the two Covenants ; wherein (as in many other things) the *Quakers* are grossly Ignorant and Erroneous.

You must know then, that there is a two-fold Covenant, which God out of his gracious condescension hath vouchsafed to enter into with man, according to the different state and condition he found him in : The first was made with *Adam* (for himself and his posterity,) whilst he remained in the state of Innocency ; And this by Divines is called the Covenant of works, because an exact obedience was required from him, and a reward promised him upon that obedience.

Adam

Adam violating that Covenant, and thereby falling from his Original happy state; he and all mankind are made utterly incapable of receiving any benefit thereby. And now we are to consider man in another state (*viz.*) of sin and misery. And Gods compassion was such, that he was pleased to enter into a second Covenant with him, according to the degenerate estate he was fallen into: and this is usually called a Covenant of Grace; because a more superabundant measure of grace is seen, and infinitely more favour shown, in Gods entrance into Covenant with Man in his lapsed condition, for his restitution and reconciliation, than in his state of Integrity for his preservation.

This latter Covenant God made with *Adam* soon after his fall, in these words, *The seed of the Woman shall break the Serpents head, Gen. 3. 15.* that is, God shall send his Son *Jesus*, who shall be born of the seed of the Woman, and he shall destroy the power, and dominion of the Devil. And this afterwards he plainly repeated to *Abraham*, *Gen. 22. 17, 18.* And entails this promised seed to his Loyns. But his Son *Isaac*, that Type of this promised seed God commands him to offer up, on Mount *Moriab*; which command, when he was about to execute, a countermand stays his hand, and a *Ram* is by Gods good Providence provided for a Sacrifice; to intimate to us, that the

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promised seed was not then to be offer'd up, but should be suspended for a time, and that in the mean time God would accept the Sacrifices of *Rams, Bulls, Goats, &c.* as Types, and Figures, that the promised seed should in due time offer up himself, a full propitiatory Sacrifice, Oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole World.

Now to say that *Abraham, Moses, and David* were under the first of these Covenants, (*viz.*) the Covenant of works, is notoriously false; for that Covenant was but a small time in force, and after *Adam's* fall, but a small time of use, because it could not give life, none living under it but *Adam*; all hopes of Salvation ever after, depending upon the grace of the second Covenant, which is the only plank after Shipwrack.

The old
and new
Covenant
signify
the old
and new
dispensa-
tion of
the same
Covenant
of grace.

Par. But do we not read in *Heb. 8.* of an old Covenant which was to be done away, and a new Covenant to succeed in the room of it? Was not the old Covenant the Covenant of works, and did not *Abraham, Moses, and David* live under it?

Min. That *Abraham, Moses, and David* lived under the old Covenant there mentioned, I readily grant; but that, that was a Covenant of works, I utterly deny; which that you may apprehend, you must know, that the Covenant of grace, though one and the same in substance from the first promulging of it to *Adam*, unto the end of the

World,

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World, yet is according to the several forms or modes of its administration, distinguished into Old, which was to be abolished, and New, which was never to be antiquated.

In the times of the Old Testament the Covenant of Grace was administered by Promises, Prophecies, Sacrifices, &c. forefig-nifying Christ to come, which for that time were sufficient to build up those who then lived in faith, in the promised Messiah, by whom they had remission of sins, and eternal Salvation. Under the Gospel when Christ the substance was come, those Types and Ceremonies were abolished; and the Ord-nances in which this Covenant is dispensed, are the preaching of the Word, and the Ad-ministration of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper. So that the words *Old* and *New* are not applicable to the Co-venant, as to the substance of it, but only to its various dispensation. Now that the Covenant in Old Testament times was a Co-venant of Grace, the same in substance with that under which we live in Gospel times, I prove thus: That Covenant which teach-eth Christ, by whom eternal Salvation may be attained, and which offereth pardon of sin, and acceptance to favour upon repen-tance, must needs be a Covenant of Grace: but the Covenant delivered in the Old Testa-ment, as well as that in the New, is such a Covenant, as appears from these Scriptures,

*Non est
divisio ge-
neris in
species, sed
subiecti in
acciden-
tia*

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John 5. 46, 47. *Luke* 24. 25, 26, 27. with 44, 45, 46. *John* 1. 45. *John* 8. 56. *Acts* 26. 22, 23. *Deut.* 4. 30, 31. *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. and many other places.

Par. I thank you for the information you have given me in the nature of the two Covenants; for I did think (as many of the *Quakers* do) that all that lived in the time of the Old Testament were under the Covenant of Works. And I have heard some urge it (as it seems *Hubberthorn* here doth) to bring down the credit and authority of Old Testament Scriptures, and Preachers, but I perceive mine and their great mistake herein. I would have you now return to the Query about Oaths; and let us suppose *Hubberthorn*, by first Covenant, to understand the legal dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, under which, he saith, Oaths were lawful.

Min. Indeed *Hubberthorn* yields they were then lawful; and yet he brings in his proofs, as if they were as unlawful then as now.

Par. What are those proofs?

Min. In the beginning of his Book against *Mr. Tombs* you will find, *Hos.* 4. 3. *For Oaths the Land mourns*; and *Zach.* 5. 3. *Every one that sweareth shall be cut off*; these are his proofs.

Par. What do you gather from thence?

Min. The horrid abuse the *Quakers* put upon

upon the Scriptures, and the Spirit of God by which they were writ.

Par. How do you make it appear that they abuse the Scriptures?

Min. Doth it not appear very plainly, when they confess that in the time of the Law Oaths were lawful, yet do bring in *Hosea* and *Zachary*, who lived in the time of the Law, speaking against that usage which themselves confess was then lawful; If *Hosea* and *Zachary* were true Prophets, how can we think they contradict the truth? If they were false Prophets, why do the *Quakers* use their testimony?

Par. It may be, *Hosea* and *Zachary* did not mean the unlawfulness of Oaths then, but only prophesied of their unlawfulness in the times of the Gospel.

Min. That you make use of a pitiful shift, will be very evident, if you consider, that there was then a heavy calamity threatned, and hanging over the Land; the Prophet gives the cause thereof to be for Oaths: and if Oaths were then lawful, must the people be cut off for doing what was just and lawful? or is it reasonable to think, the people should suffer, for a sin to be committed afterwards?

Par. Do you suppose that Oaths were unlawful during the continuance of the Law.

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Min. I suppose no such thing : my design being only to shew, that fallacious way of arguing, which the *Quakers* use: and that this *Hubberthorn* (so much esteemed by them) is trap't in his own net, and confuted by himself, while he confesses Oaths to be lawful, during the continuance of the Law, and yet contradicts himself again by bringing texts out of the Law to prove them otherwise : and thus you see he brings in the Old Testament contradicting it self also, which in *Dent. 6. 13.* commands it as a duty, as also in other places, *Jer. 4. 2.* I pray you judge of these things.

Par. You have highly, and I think not untruly, charged the *Quakers* in the use of these Texts of the Prophets : for I cannot but acknowledge it an absurdity, to alledge the Scripture against it self : but I pray you discover the true meaning of them, and what swearing the people were there threatened for.

Min. If you mind the scope of the Prophet *Hosea*, and the sins which swearing is there joyned withal ; in the first verse of the Chapter you will discern, that the cause why the Land mourned was not for taking Oaths (for those are already proved, and confessed to be then lawful) but for taking them against Truth and Mercy with malicious, or injurious designs. But their bringing in *Zachary's* words to disprove the lawfulness

fulness of swearing, discovers a most dishonest principle in the Quakers, because they cannot but know, that the Prophets words are wrested by them: for the *fourth verse* expressly interprets *swearing* for which the people are threatned to be cut off, to be false-swearing only; Therefore consult both at large *Zach. 5. 3, 4.* *This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off, as on this side, according to it: and every one that sweareth shall be cut off, as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of Hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my Name.*

Par. But what do you say to an Oath now under the dispensation of the Gospel?

Min. I say the Gospel has no where abolished the lawful use of it.

Par. You will fall under *John Tombs* his charge of Antichristianism: for our Lord saith, *Matth. 5. 34.* *But I say unto you, swear not at all.* And the same is repeated by the Apostle *James, c. 5. 12.* From whence it appears, all manner of Oaths are unlawful, and they who say the contrary, do live in opposition to the Gospel.

Min. You mince the Text by taking a piece of it only (as your usual way is) of which I hope to convince you in the process

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of this discourse; in order whereunto, I shall pitch upon this method following. First, I shall shew you that these words do not generally forbid all manner of Oaths, in that large sense you take them. Secondly, I shall endeavour to give you the true sense of the words, and shew you what sort of swearing is there forbidden.

Par. It will very much contribute to my conviction if you do, as you say; Pray you therefore first prove to me, that the words do not forbid all manner of Oaths, in that large sense wherein we take them.

Min. I shall do it in this order. First, by proving it an act of Natural Religion towards God. Secondly, an act of necessary justice and charity towards men. Thirdly, that it is therefore a part of that moral and eternal Law, which our Saviour professeth he came not to *destroy*, but to *fulfill*. And fourthly, that we find it practised in the New Testament.

Par. I much desire to hear the first particular prov'd (*viz.*) that an Oath is an act of Religion.

3. *Min.* I prove it first by Reason, Secondly by consent of Nations, thus. That whereby we glorifie God and adore his Attributes, is an act of Religion; but by an Oath (rightly taken) we glorifie God and adore his Attributes, therefore such an Oath is an act of Religion. The first part of the Argument

gument is evident of it self, for what else is Religion, but to adore and glorifie God in the humble acknowledgment of his Attributes. And that we do, by an Oath (reverently taken) glorifie God, is clear from the nature (and definition) of it; for an Oath is a religious appeal unto God, the searcher of all hearts, as a witness of what we assert, or promise, and the avenger of perjury. Now that by such a reverent appeal unto God, we glorifie him; appears, in that we do therein make acknowledgment, 1. Of God's existence and being; for *he that cometh to God must believe that he is, &c. Heb. 11. 6.* and an Oath certainly is one sort of coming to God, being an immediate appeal to him, as Witness and Judge. 2. Of his Omnipresence and Ubiquity, that he is present in all places, and at all times, according to *Psalm 139. Whither shall I go from thy presence, &c.* How could we call upon him either as Witness of our sincerity, or Judge of our hypocrisie, if we did not believe him within hearing? and therefore the not having God before our eyes is in Scripture, the description of the most profligated wretchless state of sin. 3. Herein we acknowledge his Omniscience, that he is in the Apostles stile *κατασκοπεύων, the searcher of hearts*; that all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have (then more immediately) to do. 4. His truth

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truth and veracity, a Witness brought into the Court, that cannot lie, nor be impos'd upon: as saith the Apostle, *Gal. 6. 7. Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* 5. His providence and paternal care of the concerns of mankind, taking the cause of the righteous into his own hand, and helping them to right, that suffer wrong. 6. His superiority, or rather supremacy, over all things, according to that of St. Paul, *Heb. 6. 16. For verily men swear by the greater.* Therefore in swearing by him, we own him to be Supreme, and most high. 7. We herein acknowledge his vindictive justice, as he is a Revenger of Perjury; such an one as will by no means patronize iniquity, fraud, or guile, *Exod. 34. 7.* and will both bring sin to light, *1 Cor. 4. 5.* and punish it, *Rom. 12. 19.* So that I hope you see by this time, that an Oath (rightly circumstantiated and taken (*viz.:*) in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, *Jer. 4. 2.*) is a comprehensive part of Religion; It being such a solemn acknowledgment, whereby we glorifie God's Existence, Omnipresence, Omniscience, Truth, Providence, Superiority, and revenging Justice; How can you think it less then a duty, fit to be commanded by God, and to bear a part in the Moral Law; as indeed we find it doth, *Deut. 6. 13. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt serve him, and swear by his Name.* And *Jer. 4. 2. Thou*

Thou shalt swear the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness.

Par. I had thought that an Oath had been so far from glorifying God, that it had been the only profanation of his Name.

Min. Then it would never at any time have been commanded.

Par. I confess this Discourse inclines me to some more consideration about it, than hitherto I have entred into.

Min. Therefore to confirm you further, I shall resume the method propos'd, and prove that an Oath is an act of Religion, out of the light of Nature, and the consent of Nations; as is evident to such as are conversant in ancient Authors. *Aristotle*, the great Philosopher saith, *An Oath is the most venerable thing that pertains to Religion* *. *Cicero*, the learned Oratour, gives this account of an Oath: *An Oath is a religious affirmation, and what you affirm or promise by taking God to witness, ought to be kept, that is, such an Oath binds you to performance* †. And elsewhere he hath these words, *Our Fore-fathers thought no tie more fast to bind mens faith than an Oath* ||. And therefore anciently Captains of War, in listing their Souldiers, did alwayes bind them to their fidelity with an Oath; which Oath was had in so great reverence with them, that they honoured it with a religious title, calling it a Sacrament (or religious Solemnity) where-
upon

* O ὅς-
πῃ πῶ-
τα ἔν τῃ
ἐν ἑστ-
βίαις ---
† Est jus-
jurandum
affirmatio
religiosa,
quod autem
affirmatū,
quasi Deo
teste, pro-
miseris,
id tenen-
dum est.
|| Nullum
vinculum
ad astrin-
gendam fi-
dem Majo-
ris nostri
jure juran-
do arctius
esse volue-
runt.

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* *Primum
militie
vinculum
est religio.*
Sen. Ep.
95.

† *Omne
vastat
stirpemque
domumque:*
(Carmen
Pythiz in
Herod.)

upon *Seneca* (that excellent Moralist) saith, *Religion* (that is that military Oath which they call'd a Sacrament) *is the chiefeſt bond of fidelity in the Militia* *. Yea, ſo great a reverence had they for an Oath, that thoſe that broke it, were the *infamia notati*, the only men of infamy, and juſtly ſeiz'd upon by Divine vengeance. The Heathens had ſo great a dread of the ſin of perjury, that they ſaid, *It laid waſte the whole ſtock and family, root and branch* †. And what other is this, then what the Prophet *Zachary* hath ſaid almoſt in the ſame words, *cap. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. concerning the flying roll, That it ſhould enter into the houſe of him that ſweareth falſly, and conſume it with the timber and ſtones thereof.* So that herein you may take notice of the harmony and agreement between the light and the law of Nature, with the poſitive and Moral Law of God given by *Moses* to mankind, which was nothing but the Law of Nature renew'd and improv'd.

Par. How come you to alledge the testimony of Heathen Authours to prove a Chriſtian duty?

Min. Thoſe testimonies do ſignifie the univerſal conſent of mankind in this point, and that it is ingrafted in our natural principles of Reason and Conſcience, and therefore is a part of that Law of Nature which our Lord came not to deſtroy, but to fulfil, and perfect: and

and of which St. Paul speaks, *Rom. 2. 14. For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contain'd in the Law; these having not the Law, are a law unto themselves.*

Thus having prov'd an Oath an act of Religion, by Reason, and consent of Nations, confirm'd by Scripture in the reference it hath to the first Table, I shall now proceed to shew you that it is an act of Justice and Charity, in the respect it hath to the 2^d Table.

2.

Par. I pray go forward in your undertaking.

Min. If you look into the holy Scriptures, as well in the New, as the Old Testament, you'll find that the primary designation and intendment of an Oath, is for confirmation, and the end of all strife, as you may be inform'd from *Heb. 6. 16.* than which, nothing can have a more moral consideration, or have more immediate respect to Justice and Charity.

Now in order to the ending of strife and Law-suits, about mens rights and properties, you know that evidence is necessary, without which no Court of Justice can proceed to the determining of Controversies.

Par. I understand the scope of your Argument. But may not true and faithful Evidences be given without an Oath?

Min. If there were that truth in men, that their bare testimony were infallible, & of sufficient credit, then there were no need at all of an oath; but seeing *all men are lyars*, & mankind is so generally leaven'd with hypocrisies
and

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and since fear, or favour, malice, or interest sways with the far greater part of men, it becomes highly needful, that their evidences be demanded and given in such forms, as are most binding to the Conscience, which an Oath by all the world is acknowledg'd to be; and therefore called by *Diodorus Siculus*, *The greatest bond of faith amongst men* *; and by *Dionysius Hal.* *The utmost assurance* †; Beyond which (saith Bishop *Sanderſon*) we have no further ways of scrutiny ||.

* Μεγά-
λη παρ
αὐτοῦ.
ποῖς π
σις —

† Τελει-
ωτικὴ πίστις.
|| Huc ubi
ventum
est, ne plus
ultra,

Par. But if men will be nought, they may forswear themselves as well as lie; and he that makes no conscience of a lie, what conscience will he make of perjury?

Min. Conscience does not dread all sins alike, some sins it can swallow down glibly, others not without regret: and in this case, you must consider, that an Oath is a much stronger bond to the conscience than a bare Testimony: for such is the power of natural conscience, even in the breasts of bad men, that multitudes, who fear not a lie, yet do dread the solemnity of an Oath, and the horror of perjury.

Seeing therefore that the ends of justice and charity are so much served by the religious use of an Oath (as hath formerly been prov'd;) would not the abolishing of it derogate from the honour of Christianity? for while the Apostle saith, *An Oath for confirmation is the end of strife*; if you take a-

way

way an Oath, you take away that which by God is ordained to be the most effectual means of ending it, and so make Christ not so much the Prince of Peace, as Discord; by making him the abolisher of that which was design'd to compose it.

Par. I should think your Discourse very reasonable and convincing, did I not find in the Text I mentioned, *Matth. 5. 37.* after Christ had said, *Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay;* he adds, *for whatsoever is more than this, cometh of evil.* If all Oaths then be evil, how dare you call them good, or plead for the lawfulness of them?

Min. That you mistake the Text, I shall give you account in its due time and place. But that all Oaths are not evil in themselves, you may be satisfied, not only by what has already been said of their morality, and usefulness, but further by these following considerations: 1. In that by your own confession they were once lawful, therefore not morally evil. 2. By the example of the holy Patriarchs before the Levitical law was given, therefore not ceremonial. 3. By the examples of *St. Paul* and the Angel, after the Gospel was promulg'd, therefore against no Gospel Precept. I begin with the first; By your own confession they were once lawful under the Old Testament, and till you prove them repeal'd, must be so still, and therefore are not of themselves evil.

Par.

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Par. But doth not all good and evil depend upon the Divine will, and not upon the nature of the thing commanded? So that things are good or evil for no other reasons, but because they are commanded or forbidden.

Min. Should you indeed consult some of the Writers of this Age, (whose learning, I doubt, surmounts their piety) you would find them of this opinion: such as the Dutch *Szydlovius*, who tells us that all that we account now wicked, could by a Divine commandment immediately become good; and I am sorry that we have instances nearer home, even in our own Nation; such as by their Writings have not a little contributed to the debauching of this present Age. But let me tell you, that the reasons of good and evil, are eternal, and were eternally lodged in the Divine Nature: For God is not a meer, arbitrary, wilful being; his will is not a blind *impetus*; but acts by the dictates of Divine Wisdom, the disposition of his holy Nature, and the rules of eternal Justice*. So that what has an intrinsic goodness in it, was agreeable to the Divine Nature, antecedently to all Divine Commands; and whatsoever is evil in it self, was eternally repugnant to his holy Nature.

* Κατὰ τὸ
βέλημα
τοῦ θελή-
ματος αὐ-
τοῦ. Eph.
i. 11.

Par. I am very sensible, that this is a digression from our subject, but my desire of further satisfaction in this particular, prompts

prompts me to give you a further interruption.

Min. I say it is the most horrid contradiction to affirm, that God can will any thing that is disagreeable to the eternal rectitude of his Nature, as all sin is; and I appeal to your own faculties, whether love, meekness, truth, justice, purity, &c. be not more suitable to his holiness, and commend themselves to us by their inward goodness, more than hatred, murder, theft, lying, impurity, and the like. If we had not these characters of goodness impress'd upon our consciences, we should loose a main argument for the Divinity of the Holy Bible; and a false Religion, would bid as fair for our belief, as the true; miracles themselves being not able to ingage my faith, if the Doctrines to be confirm'd by them, be not agreeable to my reason, and natural conscience; to which God himself makes his appeal, *Deut. 4. 5, 7.* The heathen world, could never be brought to the embracement of the true Religion, were there not, besides the will of the Law-giver, a natural congruity in it, with their judging faculties; so that good, and evil, are not only so, because commanded and forbidden; but because they are so in themselves, and were for ever so.

Par. I thank you for this profitable digression I have caused you to make, and shall now desire you to return to your old subject;

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ject; concerning which I have this scruple to propose unto you, *viz.* that those instances, wherein an Oath is acknowledged to have been lawful, are taken out of the Ceremonial Law, which is now repeal'd by the Gospel.

Min. If it were so (as it is not) yet their having been once lawful and commanded by God, proves undeniably, that they are not evil in their own nature, for whatever things are so, can at no time, and upon no terms, be ever commanded, or countenanc'd by God, being eternally repugnant to his Will and holy Nature; (as hath been before shown to you.)

But that an Oath is not a part of the Ceremonial Law, is clear from what hath been said concerning the morality of it, which proved it a part of natural Religion and Justice, which are the things that distinguish the Moral from the Ceremonial Law.

This will further appear, if you consider that the Ceremonial Law is a system only of types and shadows, and of things to come, that is, of the Messiah, and the blessings of the Gospel; for whatever was purely Ceremonial, was purely typical; but the Law concerning an Oath was not a type of any thing to come, but had its proper and perpetual usefulness, therefore was no part of the Ceremonial Law. If you say it was a type of any thing pertaining to the times of the

the

the Gospel, shew what was its Antitype, or thing represented by it ; but if you cannot find an Antitype for it in the Gospel , you may then be satisfied, that the command of swearing was no part of the Ceremonial Law.

The second Argument to confirm you , that Oaths are not evil in themselves , nor part of the Ceremonial Law, is taken out of the Examples of the holy Patriarchs ; with whom an Oath was of authentick use, and held sacred, before the delivery of the Levitical Law.

I shall begin with *Abraham, the Father of the Faithful*, Gen. 21. 23, 24, 31. where *Abraham* and *Abimelech* made a Covenant and confirm'd it by Oath interchangeably ; and (what is observable in that passage) *Abraham* gave the very place, where they swore to each other, a name, which was to be in *perpetuam rei memoriam*, a memorial of that solemnity, calling it *Beersheba* ; in English, *the well of the Oath*. Consult also that other instance, in that holy man, Gen. 24. 2, 3, 9. and it is not to be thought that *Abraham* would give his servant an Oath rashly , nor exercise his authority to impose on his Conscience.

The same is also confirmed by the example of *Isaac*, making a Covenant, and swearing to *Abimelech*, Gen. 26. 28, 31. as also by the example of *Jacob*, making a Cove-

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nant, and swearing to his Uncle *Laban*, by the fear of his Father *Isaac*, *Gen. 31.53*. An Oath therefore having been so sacred and authentick with those holy Fathers, before the Law was given by *Moses*, it follows, that it was no part of the Levitical, but of that Moral Law which (as has been said) our Saviour professeth he came not to destroy.

Par. Had the *Quakers* liv'd under the Old Law, they would certainly have been convinc't by what you have said of its lawfulness, and not only so, but usefulness, having been made an instrument of establishing such happy leagues and bands of amity; but to us that live under the Gospel, are not our circumstances alter'd with the dispensation, and by the prohibitions already quoted?

3. *Min.* I say the Gospel dispensation does not repeal any Law, that is Moral, and of continued usefulness (as hath been said) and such is this of a lawful Oath: for that Law, whose reason and usefulness is perpetual, and the same to us under the Gospel, as it was to them under the Law, is it self perpetual, and therefore not repeal'd by any new dispensation. So that unless you can tell me some use it was to them which it is not to us, you can have no reason to believe it was any of those Laws which our Saviour came to abolish; there being as much

*Rationes
boni &
mali sunt
eternae.*

much need of it to the ending of strife, in this litigious age especially, wherein the *love of many is waxed cold*, as there could be in former times.

And that those words you so much insist on, do not wholly forbid all Oaths, is manifest by the instances we find upon record in the Scriptures of the New Testament, which were written by that infallible Spirit whereby the holy Penmen were acted, and which (one would think) should be sufficient to convince you that call so much for examples, if you were not prejudic'd; They are the examples of *St. Paul* the Apostle of the Gentiles, and of the Angel, *Revel. 10. 5, 6.* As for the first of these, if you do seriously consider them, you'll find, that they are as manifest Oaths and express instances of swearing, as those publick forms now in use in our Courts of Justice, which you are so much offended at.

Par. Pray produce me these places, for I think I should be much satisfied if you could convince me that *St. Paul* swore.

Min. 'Tis hard to convince prejudic'd persons by the clearest truths that can be produc'd; till they lay down their passions, and be willing to be instructed, but your humility gives me confidence that you are none of those.

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Par. I hope I am not, but am willing to be convinc'd by the truth, and therefore I pray you proceed.

Min. The Instances are in *Rom.* 1.9. *For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit, in the Gospel of his Son, that, &c.* *Rom.* 9. 1. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.* *2 Cor.* 1. 18. *But as God is true, &c.* and *v.* 23. *Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul, that, &c.* *2 Cor.* 11. 31. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.* *Gal.* 1. 20. *Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lie not.* Read these with attention, and you'll find, that in every one of these instances *St. Paul* makes a most solemn appeal to God, as witness of what he affirms, and judge of his sincerity: and what other thing is an Oath? for you'll find as much of the nature of an Oath in them, as in several forms recorded in the *Old Testament*, for Oaths. See *Ezech.* 14. 16, 18. where God, (who can do nothing that is immoral, or unbecoming his holiness) swears in these words, *As I live, &c.* here God swears by his life; and is it not as much an Oath in *St. Paul* to swear by Gods truth, *2 Cor.* 1. 18. *As God is true, &c.* And those other, *Gen.* 22. 16. *By my self have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done*

done this thing, &c. Psalm 89. 35. Once have I sworn by my Holiness that I will not lie unto David: are, as if he had said, As I am, and as I am holy. And for these, or what other forms of Oaths, we find in Scripture, whether in more, or fewer words, they all do invoke God both as Witness, and as Judge, both to attest, and revenge it if we perjure: for the Swearers conscience does tell him, that if God be called in to witness a lie, he will both detect, and revenge it. All this is in the sense of every Oath: So that that form in the close of our publick Oaths, *So help me God*, &c. hath neither any thing new in it, nor any more, than is included in the sense of every Oath; for execration, is implied and understood wheresoever it is not express'd, even in those Elliptical forms of swearing us'd by God himself, whether express'd by a bare attestation, *Ezech*, 14. 16. *Gen*. 22. 16. *Psalm* 89. 35. or by a bare execration only, as *Psalm* 95. ult. according to that of the Learned Casuist (Bishop *Sanderson de juramento*, p. 15.) *Omne juramentum quocunque modo prolatum*, &c. that is, Every Oath, in what manner soever it is utter'd, either expressly, or implicitly, invokes God both as Witness, and as Judge; and even a bare attestation *subinfert execrationem* (as he saith) infers an execration, as its necessary consequent: Ac-

Πᾶς ὅρκος
εἰς κατὰ-
ραν τὰ δὲ
τῶ ἱ. ὁπ-
ορτίας. cording to that of *Plutarch*, Every Oath
ends in a curse upon Perjury. So that those
mentioned forms used by *St. Paul*, were as
positive Oaths, as any other you find in the
Bible, or any of those that are impos'd up-
on you by the Laws of the Land.

Par. I little thought that Oaths under
the Gospel could have been so clearly made
out.

Min. I shall confirm you yet by a fur-
ther instance, and it is that of the Angels
swearing, *Rev.* 10. 5, 6. and we need not
fear to imitate any thing that is done in
Heaven, where nothing but the will of God,
nothing evil and unholy can be done; Our
Lord has taught us to pray, *Thy will be
done in earth as it is in heaven*; that is, as
it is by the Angels whom he has propos'd
to us as patterns for our imitation; so that
an Oath, taken in due order, can neither be
evil in it self, nor inconsistent with the hea-
venly conversation.

Par. But may not the Angels and we act
under different dispensations, so that that
may be lawful and commanded them, which
to us may be forbidden?

Min. That the Angels and we are joyn-
ed in the same fraternity, and tye of obe-
diencē, even to the same Scripture, is evi-
dent from the Angels confession, *Rev.* 22. 9.
who calls himself *our Fellow-servant*, and
of our Brethren the Prophets, and of them
which

which keep the sayings of this Book.

Par. But perhaps by that Book, whose sayings he kept, he meant no other than the Book of the *Revelations*.

Min. Suppose it were so; yet that Book was indited by the same spirit that all the rest were; so that whatsoever is allow'd in it, cannot be contradicted, or forbidden in any other Scripture. All which serves to make that example of the Angel sufficiently valid, to prove swearing lawful under the Gospel.

Par. But where do you read that *St. Paul* layed his hand on the Bible, and kissed it, when he swore, as you do? I thought you had held these necessary parts of a publick Oath.

Min. The laying on of the hand, and kissing the Book, we hold to be no essential parts of an Oath, but only decent and comely ceremonies, enjoyned by the wisdom of our Governours, to make the act more solemn, and to excite the Juror, to a greater reverence and dread of the Majesty of God, and his threatnings denounced in that Book.

Par. I have now nothing left to object, but the forementioned Texts, *Matth.* 5. 34. *James* 5. 12. whereof if you can give me as clear an account, as you have done of my other doubts, I shall hereafter be of your udgment, and withal thankfulness acknowledge

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ledge it an happy hour when I met with you; but these Texts look so opposite to your design, that I cannot as yet acquit my self of all fears, of being Antichristian, in thinking swearing lawful.

Min. By the same way of reasoning that the *Quakers* charge us with Antichristianism, by vertue of those Texts, I can prove them Antichristian.

Par. Shew wherein.

Min. You know, that we are commanded by the Apostle *to speak evil of no man*, *Tit. 2.3.* The *Quakers* transgress this command by speaking evil of the Clergy, therefore they do fall under the charge of Antichristianism.

Par. You are to consider in what sense the Apostle forbids us *to speak evil of no man*. You are not to imagine his design in that Text, is absolutely to restrain us from giving true characters of evil and unworthy men (upon a just occasion;) then he himself had been faulty in speaking evil of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* the Copper-smith.

i Tim. i.

2c.

2 Tim. 4.

14.

Besides, how should we reprove, or how should justice upon the most notorious offenders be administred, if their faults may not be spoken of? Therefore the words cannot bear a general interpretation, but must be taken with a limitation: for otherwise a monstrous train of absurdities must attend such an exposition. But I do conceive

conceive that the words do relate to that horrid custome of reflecting upon the good names and reputations of men in their ordinary converse, whereby we may deprive our Neighbour of that which is as dear to him, as his life, or livelyhood. So that 'tis speaking evil, detractingly, untruly, or maliciously; or without just occasion, in our communication, which is the thing there prohibited by the Apostle.

Min. I must confess, you have given the true meaning of the Apostles words. And I hope you will not abridge me of the liberty which you take your self, in freeing the Texts under debate from a wrong construction of them. Whereas you say, I ought to consider, in what sense the Apostle bids us speak evil of no man; so let me tell you, that you ought to consider too in what sense our Lord saith, *Swear not at all*.

You are not to suppose that 'tis our Lord's design to forbid all manner of Oaths upon what occasion and solemnity soever they may be tendred; then (as hath already been shewn) St. Paul had not only been faulty in making so honourable a mention of an Oath, *Hebr. 6. 16.* but much more faulty in taking an Oath himself; and then both he and the Angel, *Rev. 10.* had fall'n under the charge of Antichristianism. Therefore (according to your phrase) the words cannot bear a general interpretation,
but

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but must be taken with a limitation: there being a peculiar and proper sense to which that prohibition is to be restrained.

Par. I'm very willing to be informed, therefore I beseech you explain these words, *Swear not at all*: together with those in *James 5. 12.*

Min. Seeing our Saviour in that gracious Law of his has forbid nothing that is morally good, nothing that is either indifferent or expedient, *1 Cor. 6. 12.* it must needs follow, that an Oath is no further forbidden, than as it is evil; that is, when it prophanes the Name of God, *Deut. 19. 12.* and 28. 58. or doth any way dishonour him, which an Oath doth, when it is false, irreverent, or needless. In these instances an Oath, being so dishonourable to the Divine Majesty, is absolutely forbidden, namely, all swearing by the creature, or by any thing propos'd to our vain fancy (that being to make an Idol of the creature, and to set it up for a God) as also all swearing by the express name of God in mens ordinary *communication*, which is for the most part so full of passion, and vain transportation, as to expose men to the frequent abuse of Gods Name, and the danger of perjury.

And therefore I must inform you that our blessed Saviour took the occasion of this prohibition from the gross errors both of
Jew

Jew and Gentile about this point, and from the wicked customs of common swearing and prophaneness, which by those errors were encouraged. I will therefore shew you, first what those evil customs were, and then give you the sense of the words as they lye in the Text, and are accommodated to the healing of those corruptions in doctrine and practise.

The erroneous glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, and the Jewish Doctors taught, that while they abstained from the mention of Gods Name, it was lawful to swear by the Creature as oft as they pleas'd; and that such swearing (though falsely) was no perjury. See *Matth. 23. 16, 18, 21.* There you will find, that they made nothing of swearing by the Temple, the Altar, or by Heaven, supposing it did not bind the Conscience. Secondly, that it was lawful at any time to swear by Gods Name, so that they swore nothing but truth, and *performed their Oaths unto the Lord.* And these opinions, it seems, the Jewes thought consistent enough with that part of the Law cited by our Saviour, *Matth. 5. 33. You have heard that it hath been said by them (or rather to them) of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy self.* And according to those corrupt Doctrines, they acted without fear or measure, by that wretched custom
of

of common swearing. To the confuting of which Doctrines, he accommodates his answer in the verses following. Against the first of them, *viz.* swearing by the Creature, he opposes that prohibition in the 34, 35, 36 verses. *But I say unto you swear not at all, neither by Heaven, &c.* Against the latter, *viz.* swearing by the Name of God in our ordinary converse, he gives this precept, *v. 37. Let your communication be yea, yea, &c.*

Par. But does not our Saviour say there, *Swear not at all*, and so do's he not generally forbid all Oaths whatsoever?

Min. To ease you in this scruple, let me tell you what advice I heard a famous Judge give to a Jury; *You must not* (said he) *determine by bits and parcels of what you have heard attested, but you are to consider your whole evidence, and accordingly bring in your verdict.* So let me tell you, that to give the true account of any Scripture, you are not to imitate the *Quakers*, who determine upon such bits and scraps, as they steal out of the Word of God; by which means they make one part of the Scripture contradict another, and so expose themselves to the grèatest errors imaginable; but to find out the true sense of any Scripture, you must determine according to the whole evidence, by comparing the parts of it together with each other, and by

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considering the scope of the Text, from the whole so compared, and considered, to gather the true meaning of it. And so here in this place you are not to take these words single by themselves, for you see they stand not alone, and are not a whole sentence by themselves, but are immediately conjoyned in a continued discourse with other words, which do restrain, and limit them. So that when he says, *Swear not at all*; he adds, *neither by heaven, &c. nor by the earth, &c.* so as the prohibition is limited to those things the Jewes were wont to swear by, in order to the reforming of that evil custome amongst them: and therefore to each of those Oaths which he forbids, he adds a reason to convince them of their error. He bids them not swear at all by Heaven, *because it is Gods throne, &c.* as if he had said, The Pharisees teach you that swearing by heaven, by earth, by *Jerusalem*, by your head (by the Temple, by the Altar, &c. *Matth. 23.*) are no real binding Oaths; and that therefore to swear by them falsely is no perjury; *But I say unto you, swear not by heaven, for it is Gods throne*, and therefore includes him that sits on it, so that he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and him that sitteth thereon, *Matth. 23. 22.* and therefore his Oath is as really binding both to the sin and punishment (if he forswear) as if he had sworn expressly by the
Name

Name of God. Neither swear by *the earth*, for it is *his footstool*, and therefore (agreeable to the other argument) he that sweareth by *the earth* sweareth by it, and him that setteth *his foot upon it*. Neither shalt thou swear by *Jerusalem*, for it is the *City of the great King*; he therefore that sweareth by *Jerusalem*, sweareth by it, and him that inhabiteth in it. And this is the same our Saviour saith, *Matth. 23. 21. Whoso shall swear by the Temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwells therein.* Again, he saith here, *Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black*; that is, it is not in thy power to engage, or pawn it for the truth of any thing thou affirmest; for thou didst not make it, neither canst thou so much as change the colour of one hair; therefore he that swears by his head, swears by it, and him, to whom he owes his head, his life and safety. So that whensoever you swear by any Creature, you do by interpretation, swear by the Maker of it. Which, when you swear falsely by the Creature, involves you in the guilt of perjury before God, and of the breach of that Law which saith, *Thou shalt not forswear thy self*; for in every Oath whatsoever a man swears by, it is God which is call'd upon either expressly or implicitly.

*Vid. Bishop
Sand. de
jur. p. 7.*

Par. But while our Saviour saith, *Swear not at all, neither by heaven, &c.* and then immediately addeth these words, *Let your communication be yea; yea, nay, nay;* have not these last words a relation to the other? So that his meaning should be, Do not bind or urge any thing you shall say, by any forms or further inforcements than by these terms of asseveration, *yea, yea, nay, nay;* This is that I took to be the meaning of the words, so as to make all Oaths unlawful.

Min. This objection of yours is so far from so doing, that it hath in part forestall'd the explication which I was preparing to give you of the scope of our Saviours discourse; for by the relation you rightly take notice of, it is evidently restrained to that abuse of the tongue in common talk and communication here particularly mentioned; and so to that very prophanation whereby both Jews and Gentiles had then most licentious-ly corrupted their conversation; yea, and that by allowance from the Jewish Interpreters of the Law, which therefore it was high time for our great Law-giver to correct, and tell them, that in ordinary communication, those plain asseverations of *yea* and *nay* (or *yes* and *no*, which are the same) or other words of the like importation, either used singly, or else for more vehemence sake, repeated if need require, are enough

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*The evils
from
whence
swearing
in commu-
nication
proceedeth*

to give credit to what we say, if we would use our selves to speak truth. And that these are as much as can be safely used in such promiscuous discourses, wherein passion, interest, transportation, and too much haste, or inconsiderateness do usually carry the tongue out of its bounds, and therefore would provoke men to multiply words, and Oaths, and bring them in danger not only of rash, irreverent swearing, but even of perjury it self.

Par. But is not the explication of this place disproved by that passage in *James* 5. 12. where he saith, *But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other Oath.* Doth not the Apostle here expressly forbid all manner of Oaths?

Min. The Apostle *St. James* do's mean only all Oaths of that kind there mentioned, and then so much used by Jew and Gentiles; for he leaves out some of those, which our Saviour had instanced in, and breaks off with this clause, *nor by any other oath;* which implies his meaning to be, that as we are not to swear by heaven, nor the earth, so neither by any other such like Oath, which our Saviour had forbidden, (*viz.*) neither by *Jerusalem*, nor by the Temple, the Altar, &c. and consequently by no created being; for if Christ has not forbidden all kinds of Oaths, *St. James* has not; for the ser-

vant

vant is not greater than his Lord, either to institute any new law, or to repeal any which Christ left in force. Neither can we think St. *James* intended any thing he said, to charge St. *Paul's* Oaths with sin, which we find in those Epistles he writ by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and which were used by him for the more solemn confirmation of those truths he wrote to several Churches: And as little can we think that he accuseth the holy Angel in *Revel. 10.* for swearing. Without doubt St. *James* offers at a repetition of our Saviours doctrine; for while he saith, *Let your yea be yea, and your nay nay*; his meaning is, Let your promise be performance, and let your word be the truth, to the end that amongst all, with whom you converse, you may be believed without an Oath: And so he adds, *lest you fall in* ~~in~~ *in* (as some authentick Copies have it) that is, into hypocrisie, and so into lying and perjury, by occasion whether of your passions of any sort, or of those frequent inadvertences which we are so subject to in our common talk.

Par. I thank you for the large pains you have taken in giving me the sense of this Scripture, which has so much puzzled me; and that you may see I have not heard you without attention, I thus apprehend your meaning.

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An Oath being in it self an act of Religion towards God, and of so much justice and charity towards my Neighbour, in determining publick causes; it remains that it is a part of that Moral Law, which our Saviour came not to repeal; and therefore this Text must not be interpreted to do so; but hath a peculiar reference to those errors in doctrine and practice among the Jews, which the words are designed to correct, that is, all swearing by the Creature, which the Jewes falsly suppos'd to be no Oaths, and so not binding, and all swearing by the Name of God in our common talk; because such a license might daily expose men both to rash and false swearing; in place whereof, our Saviour hath therefore substituted those plain asseverations of *yea*, *yea*, *nay*, *nay*, or such like; but the use and lawfulness of swearing remains, when I am called by lawful Authority to declare my conscience in order to the ending of any controversy, wherein my evidence may be concerned.

I shall give you no further disturbance in the case of an Oath, having had all my scruples about it sufficiently answer'd. I shall now only desire to know, whether the Quakers, tying themselves to the strict use of (*yea*) and (*nay*) in all their communication, do not live in a stricter conformity to that precept of the Gospel, then those who neglect the use of them?

Min,

Min. I with the *Quakers* did as seriously consider the meaning and occasion of these phrases, as they superstitiously affect the use of them. Our obedience to this command of Christs consists not in the precise use of the words (*yea*) and (*ay*), but in the truth and integrity of the speakers heart, in what forms and phrases soever he expresseth himself: No words being of further use, than as they are the Interpreters of the heart. For it is not words and phrases, wherein good and evil consisteth, but truth and honesty, which commends us to God, and the only thing commanded in his Law.

Par. I have no other objection concerning Oaths, I pray therefore let us pass to some other subject of Controversie, wherein if you can give me as much satisfaction as I have received in this (beyond my expectation,) I hope neither will you have cause to think your pains, nor I my time, ill bestowed.

Min. I shall readily embrace your motion, and therefore let me hear what your other scruples are?

Par. You pretend your selves to be the Apostles successors and imitators; if so; how comes it to pass, that you preach not as they did; but single out a Text, out of which you compose your Sermons: What warrant have you for so doing?

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Min. The Apostles themselves took texts out of Scripture, to expound and apply them. St. Peter did so in his Sermon *Acts 2.* and St. Paul in the Synagogue at *Antioch, Acts 16.* And they both preached Christ out of the same text, namely, *Psal. 16. 10.* And the whole fourth Chapter to the *Romans* is but an enlarged discourse upon *Gen. 15. 6.* Again, you may consider, the Apostles and we act under different circumstances: They might sometimes, without a Book, speak by the sole authority of infallible inspiration; But now such extraordinary gifts being ceased, we take texts, to shew we have no other Doctrine to deliver but what is taken out of the written Word of God: And our only work is to explain and apply the same. And is not this kind of preaching more fit to be heard by you, and has it not more authority to command your reverence and attention, then the extemporary effusions of those men, who leaving the conduct of the Holy Scriptures, do rashly vent their own fancies, and schismatical dreams, and by lying divinations do prophesie out of their own hearts, and from the heats of a disturbed brain?

*Ezek. 13.
2, 7.*

Par. I expected you would have produced Dr. *Sherlock's* instances?

Min. Which be they?

Par. He endeavours to vindicate the custom by two Scripture examples; The one
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of Christ himself, who took a text, and preach't upon it, *Luke* 4. 17, 22. The other of *Philip*, who took a text which the *Eunuch* read in *Isa.* 53. 7. and preached Christ unto him, converting him to Christianity, by giving the sense of the text; the *Eunuch* being not able of himself to understand it, without an Interpreter, *Acts* 8. 30.

Min. And were not his Instances very proper to justify this practice, and did not the Doctor speak worthily, and like himself?

Par. For my part I was well satisfied with them, till such time as I met with a Reply from *Richard Hubberthorn*.

Min. What was there in that Reply?

Par. His words are these, *O thou enemy and slanderer of Christ, and the Apostles, did they take texts to get money with them, and to lye a quarter of a year, or half a year in a text? Christ came to fulfil the Scripture, and the Apostles shewed how he fulfilled the Scripture, and came to fulfil that which the Prophets spake. The Scribes and Pharisees were learned men, and they could not open the Scriptures; Peter, an unlearned man, he opened the Scriptures.*

Min. Had you not more reason to be confirm'd, than alter'd by such a brutish Reply? I pray answer me this question, Did

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Dr. *Sherlock* any where lay such a slander upon Christ and his Apostles, as to say, they took Texts to get money with them, or to ly half or a quarter of a year in them, as this man so injuriously infers?

Par. I do not remember he did.

Min. Who then think you is the slanderer, and who stood at this mans elbow to dictate unto him that wretched untruth? But if you mind this reply a little better, you may observe that he seems at last to yield to the lawfulness of taking a Text, as being convinc'd by the undenyable proofs produced by the Doctor. His quarrel is, that we take Texts to get mony with them, and that some insist a quarter of a year, or half a year upon a Text, which I think very few do, nor any but when their Text has such plenty and variety of matter in it, as requires much time in the handling of it, which is a thing that hath no unlawfulness in it at all, and therefore is far from being a just cause of separation from us. Lastly, observe that he magnifies the learning of the Scribes and Pharisees, and makes a very *Ignoramus* of St. *Peter*, affirming that *Peter*, who open'd the Scriptures, was an unlearned man.

Will they prove that St. *Peter*, who open'd the Scriptures, was an unlearned man? Is there no difference betwixt *Peter* the Fisherman, and *Peter* the Disciple? Had he been so long with him *that spoke as never man spake,*
and

and is he still unlearned? Did the holy Ghost give him the tongue of the learned, nay a portion of the Cloven Tongues by which he spake all languages, to enable him to expound the Scriptures to all nations; and is this Peter unlearned still? Doth he not say that *the unlearned and the unstable wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction*, and is he himself unlearned? Is this the Doctrine of *their dear innocent Richard*? is this *a conquering through truth*? as some of his * brethern say of him. 2 Pet. 3. 16.
I pray consider whether such blind Guides, * G. W. and G. F. and those that follow them be not in danger of falling into the ditch?

Par. But I pray tell me what is the meaning of the last Text you quoted, 2 Pet. 3. 16. *In which are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do other Scriptures to their own destruction.* Who are they whom St. Peter here calls unlearned?

Min. If those words of St. Peter were duly weigh'd and understood by you, they would give you abundant satisfaction in many of your scruples, and let you see the weak foundation of Quakerism, or rather that it hath none at all, but ignorance, unstableness, and wresting of the holy Scriptures, which the Apostle St. Peter reproves in this Text. In which are four particulars recommended to your observation.

1. That

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1. That some passages of Scripture are so obscure and dark, that they are hard to be understood.

2. That by that occasion such places have been wrested, that is, mis-interpreted.

3. A twofold cause in those that wrest them, *viz.* want of learning, and the want of stability or stedfastness.

4. The sad effects of it, *viz.* destruction to themselves.

Par. If you suppose that many things in our present debate will fall under these heads, I pray let us proceed in your method, and discourse these particulars at large. Therefore what do you say to the first proposition that some passages in Scripture are so obscure, that they are hard to be understood; What infer you from thence against the *Quakers*?

Min. If the Scripture abounds with so many obscure passages, I infer thence the same which the Apostles words do imply, *viz.* the necessity of Learning in the interpreting of Scriptures, and the great danger of mis-interpreting them without it, as follows in the next words, that tell us *de facto* how much they are wrested for want of Learning. Therefore your self may infer further, that they that want it, as most of your Leaders do, are very unfit persons to be preachers and interpreters of the holy Word

Word of God, or to be followed by you as your Guides. Mysteries, Types, and Allegories, which the Bible is so full of, being such things as render holy Scriptures difficult, even to the most learned, how much more to the unlearned and the unstable. Gal. 4. 24.

Par. But these are taken out of the Old Law, which was a shadow of things to come; a shadow indeed is dark, but what is this to the Gospel, which is clear and bright?

Min. You will not deny that *St. Paul* was a preacher of the Gospel: Now *St. Peter's* words, as they imply the obscurity of some other Scriptures in general; so do they affirm that *St. Paul's* Epistles in particular were hard to be understood; and if they were hard then, in those days of primitive light and purity, and extraordinary inspiration, and even to those that were acquainted with the Original Languages, whereing they were written, and with the peculiar proverbs and proprieties of them; If they were hard then to those who well understood the rites and customs of the people to whom they were particularly written; and who might be easily informed of the particular occasion, and by that means, of the true scope of them; how much more difficult must they needs be to us at this distance, especially to such as are wholly strangers

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gers to all those things aforementioned, that are so necessary to the making any dark Scriptures intelligible.

Par. This I cannot deny, but then I would gladly know, how to reconcile this with such passages in the Bible, which (contrarywise) call the Gospel a Light, and bid us walk in the Light.

Min. You are greatly mistaken in supposing that I affirm all the Scriptures hard to be understood; I only say, as *St. Peter* sayes, that some passages are so; for so run the words, *in which are some things hard, &c.*

Par. Are then the necessary points of Religion in them, hard to be understood?

Min. No, they are not, for whatsoever is necessary to salvation, either to be believed, or to be done, are in some place or other in holy Scripture fitted to the most vulgar capacity and shallowest understanding, as (for example) the history of Christs birth, death, resurrection, and ascension is, as necessary to be believed, so plain to be understood (though yet it hath been perverted by the mis-interpretation of the *Quakers* and some Hereticks, and from plain History turn'd into meer Allegory;) Then the duties of the first and second Table of the Law; and the Love of God and our Neighbour; all the Evangelical Pre-

Precepts and the Essentials of Religion, are in the Gospel made such easie Doctrines, that he that runs may read them, being fitted to the capacity of the most unlearned: And this reminds us of our duty of thankfulness to our great Law-giver in that he hath made those Doctrines most plain, which are most necessary to be believed, and those things least necessary which are most difficult: As for example, it is not necessary to salvation to be knowing in all the circumstances of the Levitical Rites, nor in all the Genealogies of the Scripture, nor in all the Apocalyptical Prophecies, and therefore the obscurity of them need not dismay us.

Par. Certainly God would never have sent his Messengers to deliver those things to the world, which he did not indispensibly require every one to understand.

Min. I hope to convince you of this mistake, and to assist your apprehension by this plain comparison. Suppose a King makes a great Feast for his Subjects; he prepares meats for all constitutions, and different dishes for different stomachs, that among all this variety every person should feed upon that which is most agreeable to his constitution; just such preparations hath God made for the Church in holy Scriptures, where are
 . Vyands

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Vyands for all pallats : For the strong, there is strong meat, and mysteries to exercise the greatest Wits and the most improved Understandings, *Heb. 5. 14.* And as for those, whose understanding is either clouded by an unhappy constitution, or was never well open'd and improv'd by education, to such there is not wanting what is necessary, even *milk for babes* ; many passages, especially those of the greatest concern, being written in such a plain and familiar style, that the weakest and most illiterate (of which number a greatest part of the members of the Church are) shall never be able to excuse the neglect of them ; the Omniscient Author of the Scriptures herein graciously condescending to the shallowest capacities, to let them see, that they were not forgotten nor overlook't by him, who says, *All Souls are his, Ezek. 18. 4.* The Scriptures being ordinarily compared to such a River, wherein the Elephant may swim, and the Lamb may wade : But when illiterate people, who commonly see no further than the outward appearance of things, will venture to be guides, and will be rashly passing judgment upon that which is above their understandings ; according to that character given of such men, *1 Tim. 1. 7. Desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm ;* and do leave the plain ealie paths, and confidently falling

ling upon points too high for them, no wonder if such wrest and pervert the Scriptures.

Par. I remember that was the second particular, that the Scriptures have been wrested; How do you make that good?

Min. This is matter of fact, and known to all that are acquainted either with men, or Books, for we all too sadly know, that there is not that opinion in Religion, be it never so wild and absurd, but challengeth authority from the Scriptures. Though truth be the same, yet every sect lays claim to it; and though the Scripture be the fountain of truth, yet is it by some rendred the very sink of errours: Go to all the wild Sects, yea Heresies in the world, those of the *Arrians*, *Socinians*, *Antinomians*, *Ranters*, as well as this of the *Quakers*; all these will, with equal confidence, challenge an authority from the Word of God.

Nullum facinus absque patrocinio. Sen.

The fault here is not in the Scriptures, but in them that do abuse and wrest them to their own conceptions, to make them speak their own sense; as for instance, Suppose a man that is troubled with a Vertigo in his head, should tell you that he is confident, the earth turns round; 'tis not the earth, but a disturbed brain that is the cause of this mis-apprehension; So every Fanatick will tell you, that he's confident, he has the Scripture on his side, in the behalf of his opinion;

opinion; where is now the fault, in the Scripture? or in the whim in his pate? The Scriptures are in no fault for any irregularities in the conceptions of such men: The fault is in their byass'd affections, and their want of steady principles, and defect both of wit and grace; but the true sense of Scripture words continues one and the same; though mens erroneous conceptions and interpretations of them should still abound and vary to the worlds end:

Par. But how then happens this strange variety in the interpretation of Scripture?

Min. By taking the words thereof to put what construction they please upon them, while they mistake their true scope and meaning; for it is not the Letter, but the Sense, that is the Word of God. And 'tis not only Quakers and other Separatists that have the words of Scripture, but the Devil also, as you will find *Matth.* 4. 6. when he tempted our Saviour; He replies there with a Text of Scripture. But the Devil and these wanting the sense and design, take the shell and leave the kernel. It was St. *Augustines* saying, *That Hereticks and Schismaticks steal the words of Christ*: intimating that they may use his Name, his Word, and his Ordinances; but then, 'tis only as Thieves and Robbers use their stoln goods to which they have no right nor property.

Par:

Λίγαι μὲν
τὰ ῥήμα-
τα, κλέ-
πτει δὲ τὴν
διάνοιαν.
Αἱρεται.
† Ἐκλε-
γμένους τὰ
ἀμφιβό-
λους εἰρη-
μολοῖα, εἰς
τὰς ἰδίας
μεταγύρει
δοξας.
Clem Alex.
strom. 70.

Par. Give me now leave to remind you of your third particular, *viz.* the causes there exprest, why the Scriptures are thus wrested.

Min. I am ready to gratifie your desires, and begin with the first cause, namely, the want of learning, which is derided by *Hubberthorn*, and censur'd by those that know it not. And here you are to take special notice, that Learning is by the Holy Ghost declared so necessary for the understanding of difficult passages in the Scriptures, that the cause of the wresting them is attributed to the want of it, in these words, *which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, &c.* 2 Pet. 3. 16. Besides, I have this to say for the honour of Learning, that none do vilifie or speak disdainfully of it, but such as are unacquainted with it. It would be strange to hear a man that was born blind, discourse of colours. Ask such an one what apprehension he has of them, possibly he will tell you that he does suppose colours to be fish or flesh, or else a crack of thunder; for the true notion of colours is only to be apprehended by the Organs of sight; so that, as no colour can be discern'd or judg'd of by any but those that see it, so neither Learning by any but those that know it. And it is as impossible for unlearned men to be able to judge aright of Learning, as it is for blind men to judge of colours, or to

*Eruditio
non habet
inimicum
præter ig-
norantem.
Ignoti mul-
ta cupidō.*

H distinguish

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distinguish betwixt black and white; for 'tis peculiar to Wisdom, that she is justifi'd of her children only, because none but they can be competent Judges of her.

Par. I cannot but confess all this to be very reasonable, but yet methinks, if our Saviour had so great regard unto Learning, 'tis very strange that he should make use of illiterate persons, fishermen and such like, to be the first preachers of his Gospel.

Min. That argument diminisheth not the reputation of Learning; for 1. Though the Apostles were unlearned when Jesus called them, yet to the eternal honour of Learning, he made them learned in all tongues by a miracle, before he sent them abroad to teach all Nations; teaching us thereby, that men wholly illiterate are not fit to preach the Gospel.

2. And again, if you will rightly consider, how the case then stood, you may observe, there was great reason for it, (and it was a great instance of Divine wisdom in calling such men) *viz.* in order to the most successful promulgation of the Gospel, and the glory of God: For had our Lord chosen the Philosophers and learned Rabbies of the time, his whole Doctrine might have been opposed with greater force of argument, and would have lost much of its due reputation, by being ascrib'd to such mens invention, as if its success had been wholly owing

owing to their skill and learning, and not to the mighty power of God, 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5. It would (as to that particular) have wanted that stamp of Divinity which the miracle of their inspired learning set upon it. Which was St. Paul's case with the men of Corinth: Some Malignants there knowing his education to be altogether scholastical, took an occasion thence secretly to undermine his authority in the Church of God, as though he had wrought upon the people only by his learning and policy; which occasion'd those protestations of his, 1 Cor. 2. 4. *That his preaching was not with the enticing words of mans wisdom, &c.*

The truth of the Gospel being thus attested by miracles, infidelity became utterly inexcusable; and among the many miracles he wrought for the confirmation of the Gospel, That was none of the least, that he should endue ignorant and unlearned men with such mighty gifts; a thing which the whole Council of the Jewish Sanedrim were astonish'd at, as you may see in Acts 4. 13. And the meaner their education was, the more evident it appear'd, that their new endowments were extraordinary and divine.

3. The Quakers run themselves into these mistakes, by not distinguishing aright between a time ordinary, and a time extraordinary, according to

H 2

which

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which God is pleas'd to suit his Providence.

Par. What do you mean by this distinction betwixt times ordinary and times extraordinary?

Min. I shall explain my meaning by this familiar instance. When the children of *Ps. 107. 5. Israel* were in the Wilderness *hungry and thirsty, their souls fainted in them*, they had there no opportunity of plowing and sowing, it was a time extraordinary; wherefore God to manifest his greatness and goodness, supplies them by as extraordinary a Providence, *viz.* by raining down *Manna* from Heaven to supply that necessity; but when the children of *Israel* came into the Land of *Canaan*, where the earth was fertile, and where they had opportunity both *Jos. 5. 12.* to plow and sow, *then Manna ceased*. So upon the first plantation of the Gospel, the world might fitly be compared to a barren Wilderness, no Universities consisting of a Gospel education (as it was impossible there should) wherefore Christ supplies that barrenness, by those extraordinary qualifications and gifts which he gave unto men; his Disciples were to plant the Gospel in all Nations, and probably understood no language but the *Syrian* (their own mother tongue;) he therefore rains upon them not *Manna*, but *cloven Tongues*, whereby they were capacitated to preach the Gospel to all People,
and

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and Nations under Heaven ; and what they wanted in education was supplied them by a miracle. But a time was coming when *these tongues should cease*, the main work being done ; and Christianity being thus already evidenced by demonstration and power (that is by miracles) we must now be contented with these ordinary means, which God's good Providence has allowed us for the conveying of knowledg to us. For though the planting of the Church required miracles, yet the watering of it does not ; the undoubted histories of the miracles already wrought, with the excellency of the Doctrine confirmed by them, being now a sufficient moral perswasion to procure the compliance of every honest heart and unprejudic'd hearer.

Par. But ought not you , who pretend to be the Apostles Successors, to receive all Gospel knowledge in the same manner , and in all those wayes wherein it was communicated to them ?

Min. I say no, and it would be presumption in us to expect it.

Par. O strange reply !

Min. 'Tis no more strange , than for me to say, that a Husbandman ought not now to look for *Manna*, but to follow his labours and watch his seasons ; for such a one would wonder, should I bid him burn his plows and other implements of Husbandry, and

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tell him that he ought so to do, for this reason, because Christ fed five thousand with a few loaves, and fewer fishes : Compare but the other case with this , and you will find them exactly parallel, and that it is as ungodly and absurd , to depend upon extraordinary revelations and miracles, while we neglect the ordinary means under which we live, as it is for a Husbandman wholly to give over husbandry in expectation of being provided for by daily miracles ; for though Gods hand be not shortned, but that it is in his power to give the Church now the same gifts of tongues, of working miracles, and the rest, as he was pleased to do in the primitive age of the Church, yea, and to feed us (without our industry) with *Manna* and *Quails*, as he did his Church in the Wilderness, or by the Ravens, as he did *Elisha* ; or to make the small provisions we have, to abound by an inexhaustible increase, as he did the Widows barrel of meal , and cruse of Oyl : and (in the Gospel) the five loaves and two fishes ; though he could soon introduce the * Golden Age, to make it a perpetual Spring, and to cause the earth to bring forth all her fruits, and teem her riches to us of her own accord ; though God could quickly do all this, and more ; though he could translate us instantly, and carry us up into a better habitation ; though he could perfect us out of hand, and the next minute

wrap

* *Omnis
feret om-
nia tellus.
Virgo*

wrap us into the third Heaven, and rest us in Paradise; though this be in his power, yet we see it is not in his will; It is not his pleasure thus to dispense his favours, nor to pour out his blessings all at once: For though the Divine power and Goodness too, be both of them infinite, yet do not engage God (though an Almighty Father) in doing good, to act like natural Agents, both always and † all he can. For the acts of his Power and Goodness are determin'd by his infinite Wisdom; And he dispenseth his gifts according as there is necessity and occasion for them.

† *Semper
et adulti-
mum posse.*

That the Spirit helpeth us to understand old truths already revealed in Scripture, we confess and pray for his assistance therein, but to pretend to such miraculous inspirations as the Apostles once had, or to new revelations beyond what was discover'd to them, is a horrible cheat set up at first by *St. Francis* and *St. Bridget*, and some other Fanatical Friars and Nuns of the Romish Church, whose steps the *Quakers* do now follow, but the delusion and falshood of such pretences will appear, if you consider

1. How highly these new revelations disparage the Holy Scripture, which if it be true, and may be believed, declares it self to be a perfect and sufficient rule in order to salvation, *2 Tim. 3. 17.* and accurseth all that shall preach any other Doctrine, *Gal. 1.*

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8, 9. and in the close of that holy Book, a woe is denounced to all that should add any thing to it, or take any thing from it; So that they who would make new additions by daily inspirations, make God himself a lyar in commending that to us for a perfect rule which needs continual additions; and the preaching of Christ and his Apostles at this rate must be thought imperfect, and that Word which should try the Spirits must submit to every new revelation; Nor do the Papists more dishonour Gods Word by making their Traditions of equal value to it, than the *Quakers* by esteeming their new revelations to be as much from the Spirit of God.

2. Consider how contrary these new revelations are to Gods constant method, in regard they came naked, without any miracles to attest them, for when did God ever send any new Doctrine into the World, and did not also give the Preachers thereof a power of working miracles to confirm that it was from him? *Moses* had this power when he was to set up the Law; *Jesus* when he was to preach the Gospel to the Jews; the Apostles when they were to convert the Gentiles: But as St. *Austin* notes, when once the World did believe, this power ceased, which was only given that they might believe. Now if God had sent the *Quakers* with any new revelations, how comes it to pass

pass, he hath given them no power of doing miracles; or why do any believe them, whenas God doth not bear witness to them as in other cases he alwayes did? shall we take their own words for it, or esteem their new Doctrines, not confirmed with any Divine Powers, as highly as we do the Holy Gospel, witnessed by many thousand miracles; this were to make our selves as foolish as those who dote upon them; and to encourage every Cheat to impose his fancies on us as Divine Revelations, who hath the confidence to say he is inspired.

3. New Revelations do manifestly contradict the Faith of the primitive Christians, and holy Fathers, who called the Scriptures the truest rule of Doctrine (a); the ancient measure of Faith (b); the Divine Standard (c); the Repolitory of all things necessary either to Faith or Manners (d); they esteemed it great impudence to affirm any thing without their Authority (e), or to expect any truths beyond what was written (f); they desired not to be believed, unless they proved their assertions by Scripture (g); Did they not in every Council examine all Doctrines and Opinions by the

(a) *Orig. in Matth. troff. 27.*
(b) *Enseb. Hist. lib. 5.*
(c) *Aug. de bon. vid. Cap. 2.*
(d) *Idem de Doct. Christ.*
(e) *Non ego tam audax ut affirmem*

quod S. Scriptura silentio præterit. Theod. Dial. 2.

(f) *Bene habet quod ita quæ scripta sunt contentus est.* Hil. de Trin. lib. 3.

(g) *Non mihi quidem simpliciter fidem adhibeas, nisi de divinis Scripturæ quæ dicam demonstrationem accipias.* Cyril. Cat. 4.

written

(h) *In u-*
num con-
venimus
& Scrip-
turis diu
ex utraque
parte pro-
latis, tam-
peramen-
tum salubri
moderatione
libravimus. Cypr.
 ad Anton.
 Ep. 52.
 (i) *Si non*
est Scrip-
tum time-
at (viz.

Hermoge-
mus) vā illud adjicientibus vel detrahentibus destinatum. Tert.
 adv. Hermog.

(k) *Messaliani dicuntur Enthusiastæ, qui cujusdam demonis*
operationem expectant, & hanc S^c. Sancti præsentiam arbitran-
tur, Hist. Tripart. l. 7. c. 11.

written (b) Word of God? and condemn those for Hereticks who invented new fancies not agreeing to it (i); And when the *Gnosticks*, *Montanists*, and *Messalians*, pretended to Prophecy, Raptures and Inspiration, they were censur'd as Impostors and Deceivers (k). By all which it appears, that if the *Quakers* had held forth their new Revelations in those pure and zealous dayes, they had also been solemnly convicted and denounced Hereticks, and why should we embrace that for a truth in these last and worst of times which the best Ages of the Church did reject as a notorious falsehood.

4. And yet this new Doctrine of new Revelations is not more false than it is mischievous to those who do believe it, for hereby their faith is uncertain as their Teachers fancy, and poor deluded souls do receive falsehood and railing, non-sense and blasphemy, as if they came from the Spirit of God; They despise the ancient and pure, certain and fixed principles of Christianity received from Jesus and his Apostles, sealed with the blood of Martyrs, and retained by all good Chri-

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Christians; and admire the discourse of a bold and empty man above them all; they take upon them to appoint new wayes of Worship, and reject the old, even the very Sacraments which Jesus himself instituted; they neglect Learning themselves, contemn it in others, and would bring the World into an *Egyptian* darkness, if others were of their mind; and all this and much more they do for a thing that never was nor never will be proved, for a dream, a meer fancy, and a miserable mistake which none can believe till they have first bid adieu to all sense and reason. So that in meer pity to those mis-guided souls who follow this false and fantastick light, I cannot but make this digression to convince them that they adore a lie for Divine Revelation, to the great hazard of their eternal damnation.

Par. But do you deny all Revelations?

Min. I own those Revelations, which are upon Record in the Holy Bible, which is the Word of God, wherein he hath revealed his Will to the Church, but no other Revelations do I hearken after.

Par. But the *Quakers* tell us, the Bible is a dead Letter, but the Word of God is quick and powerful; so is not the Bible.

Min.

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Min. By such like sottish wayes of Reasoning, I conceive, the Speakers among them endeavour to bring their silly and unstable Auditors into a contempt of Holy Scriptures, and to justify their pretences to New Lights and Revelations. To proceed then, whence learn they that the Word of God is *quick and lively*?

Par. Out of the Bible, *Heb. 4.12.*

Min. What? out of that Bible which they call a dead Letter? Judge then whether these men are acted by the rules of sobriety and reason, that call that Book a dead and senseless Letter, from whence they fetch their reasons. And where is the Religion of these men, that take a sentence out of the Word of God, to make it prove itself dead and stupid. If those places quoted by them, contain sense and reason, why do they brand that Book with such contemptible characters, by calling it dead and senseless? But if those places do truly contain no reason in them; why are the *Quakers* so senseless themselves, to produce reasons from them? Though the Leaves and Letters have no natural life in them, is therefore the sense of the Scriptures dead? And hath it no rational importance in it? And are not the *Quakers* a company of fine Cheats, to take a Bible (as some in my presence have done) and cry, *Look at this, is this quick and lively*? as if the life natural, and bodily sense, were

were meant by that Scripture which they so wretchedly abuse and prophane.

Suppose the King puts forth a Proclamation, wherein he declares his Royal will and pleasure, do you think it fit for every man that heareth it not first proclaimed, to slight it, and to say, it's a dead Letter? Is not this a way to evacuate to the Vulgar all Commands, and all Laws that are not given to every one by audible voice? Yea, and to render every thing insignificant, that does not walk and speak? Is not this the very immediate way utterly to make void the written Word and Laws of God, and to send us streight either to Enthusiasms, Dreams and Phantasms, or else to oral Traditions, &c? Is there not something of a Fanatical † Jesuit here? no doubt but these are fine wayes to decoy an illeterate multitude, as being very agreeable to them, who envy Learning, because it is out of their reach, and who are more desirous to be led by fancy, than by Laws; and therefore willing enough to have all Laws of God and Man, call'd dead Letters, to introduce their own fancies and pretended inspirations. But I pray you consider, is there no use of Books, and Writings? If you make void the Holy Scriptures, because they are written, you do by the same argument make void all Histories, Records, and all *Quakers* books also; yea, by this means you make void your father's

† *Ex pede
Herculem*

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ther's Will, and all the Deeds by force whereof, your self or any man holds his Land, and may as reasonably call them dead Letters, as you do the Bible: But if you think your written Deeds are valid; or that your written Bonds do stand in full force and vertue (according to the form they run in) to empower you to recover your Debts; why should not the written Word of God have as much force, and be as powerful to the ends for which the Wisdom of God hath design'd it, as any Writings, you have about you, are to establish your temporal Rights, or to recover your dues? If these have truth, force, and vertue in them, why should you deny that the Holy Scriptures, by those heavenly truths, those divine promises and threatnings written in them, have power and vertue by the grace of God to awaken and quicken the reader or hearer to New life, and obedience, which is the meaning of its being termed *quick and lively*. Let me further argue with you; Do we not understand one anothers minds by Epistles as well as Discourses, by words that are written, as well as words that are spoken? may you not read sense as well as hear it? And I appeal to your own conscience, whether you may not read as good sense in the visible Letters of the Bible, as you can hear, either out of the mouth of a *Quaker* or a *Jesuit*? And I cannot but wonder, that you,

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III

you, whose judgment I have formerly had a better esteem of, should now be transported so far besides your reason and senses: Will you call the Ten Commandments (written by the finger of God on two Tables of Stone) useless and insignificant characters, because they were on Stone? Can your eyes and reason read no sense in them? and whilst you have read the commands and threatnings of God, hath your Conscience been so dead, as not to find any life and power in them? And though you undervalue the Leaves and Letters, yet dare you say that you had no reverence for the Word of God, when you have heard it from the mouth of your Minister, preached with a lively and audible voice?

Par. I thank you for the pains you have taken with me, for now I perceive my mistake, and must confess that in this point I have been led into an error, for I should be very unreasonable, if I should speak any more in behalf of those absurdities which I now see are lodged in it; I shall only desire some further reasons from you, why Revelations are not still to be expected by us.

Min. I shall think no pains too much, provided you will henceforth use your Reason better than hitherto you have done, in the attention you have given to the *Quakers*; and that you will now learn to suspect
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the teachings of those men, whom you begin to see and discover; and hereafter have a greater value of the Holy Scriptures, that
 2 Pet. 1. 19. *more sure word of Prophecy*; we being sufficiently assured (let the *Quakers* say what they please) that God's Word is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths; But for any new Revelations, we need them not; the Apostle having declar'd unto us, that *the Scriptures are able to make us wise unto Salvation, thorow faith which is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. To look then for more Revelations, or a repetition of the former, would be equally an act of impudence and infidelity.

Psal. 119.
105.

Par. Why of impudence and infidelity?

Min. Would it not be an act of infidelity, not to believe God, when he plainly tells us, that *the Scriptures themselves are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith, &c. and to furnish us thoroughly to all good works*? And is it not an act of impudence, when God has plainly told us, that we have sufficient, not to be contented with them, but to expect and call for more?

Par. I confess I begin to have no esteem for these pretenders to new Revelations, so far as they are concern'd in that point; yet I can hardly be reconcil'd to Learning, because it is not to be acquired without study and industry; whereas surely it is against
 that

that exprefs command and promise given to the Disciples in *Mark 13. 11. Take no thought before hand, what ye shall speak, neither do you premeditate, but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak you, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.*

Min. Take but the true sense of this Scripture, and you can frame from thence no argument to your advantage.

Par. What is the sense of that Scripture?

Min. The words import no more than this, That whereas the Disciples were to be brought before the Kings and Potentates of the Earth, to vindicate the Doctrine of Christianity, that they might be under no discouragements, either from the presence of those before whom they were to appear, or from a sense of the meanness of their own education, he promises to supply all their defects miraculously: and whereas they had extraordinary work to perform, they might be assured of an extraordinary assistance from him: but this reacheth not to an ordinary case.

Par. But I have heard some Speakers say before they begun their Discourses, *That they did not know what they had to say, but as the Spirit gave them utterance, that only would they speak;* and although they came without preparation, yet spake notably.

A

Min.

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X

Min.

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Min. That which incited your attention (if you had understood it) should rather have frightened you away from the Sacrifice of a Fool; for there is a company of wandering Fellows that have got into a road of babling, and father their nonsensical stuff upon the good Spirit of God, and no wonder they are never out while they speak
 * *Quicquid in buccam venerit.* * whatsoever comes next on their tongues end.

But as to the Objection out of the Text you quoted, you must not interpret it to overthrow other plain Scriptures, and that plain advice which St. Paul gives to Timothy, *Till I come, give attendance to reading, exhortation and doctrine. Meditate on these things; Give thy self wholly unto them, that thy profitting may appear unto all, 1 Tim. 4. 13, 15. and study to shew thy self a workman approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, 2 Tim. 2. 15.* And there is a great deal of equity for it, as in the like case David of old told Araunah the Jebusite, That he would not offer that to God which cost him nothing. See Solomons advice, *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth; therefore let thy words be few, Eccles. 5. 2.* Wherein we may take notice, that the Spirit of God is so far from owning those temporary exercises in his Worship, that they

2 Sam. 24.
24.

they are reprov'd by him. 'Tis not the nimbleness of the fancy, quickness of invention, readiness of elocution, fluency of speech, or a ready tongue that God is delighted with; with these we work upon the imperfections of men, and these are natural faculties, with which the worst of men have been endowed; such as *Achitophel* and *Tertullus*, whilst holy *Moses* was naturally defective in his utterance, *Exod. 10. 14.* The use of these faculties in the exercises of Religion, without reverence, truth, and soberness, cannot be pleasing unto God.

Par. But do you not remember what a *Quaker* in my hearing objected to you against Learning: *That Tongues are ceas'd?*

Min. I remember it very well, and you may remember the reply I made, That Learning was so far from being oppos'd by that Scripture, that it is a mighty argument for its justification: I perceive the *Quakers* understand not the meaning of the word *tongues* (which the Scripture saith are ceased) for by them is only meant, that the *miraculous* supplies in the gift of tongues, and understanding all languages by *inspiration*, given to the Apostles and primitive Christians be now ceased, as we see they are: the Gospel being sufficiently promulg'd, and by these and all other Miracles prov'd to be Divine. And yet there remains a necessity of interpreting and understand-

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ing these original tongues, *Hebrew* and *Greek*, in which the Scriptures were written, it being impossible that without the knowledge of them, the Gospel should have been translated and communicated to us. And we have great reason to be truly thankful that the Scriptures are translated into the Vulgar Languages, but then we are beholden to the Learning of the Translators; and if Learning was at first necessary for the translating of the Scriptures, it is still as necessary for the interpreting of them. And while I observe how the *Quakers* persecute the Clergy with the venom of their tongues, and abhor their works for the ill will they bear unto their persons, my wonder is that they should look into our English Bible, it being translated by Clergy-men, and with the help of that Learning, which the *Quakers* so much despise and abhor.

So that Learning has a strong argument from the Text which you bring in prejudice of it. For if the extraordinary gift of Tongues be ceased, while there is still a necessity of understanding those Tongues for the translation of Scripture, I pray by what way and means must *We* attain the knowledge of it, but by the ordinary means of study, industry, or University education? And do you not see that 'tis Learning and learned Men that the good Providence of God hath made so highly instrumental in
the

the service of his Church. So therefore (with *Balaam*) those whom you had design'd to have curst, you against your wills have blest: and the argument by which you thought to have overthrown Learning, proves an establishment of it; and I thank you for reminding me of what I had like to have forgot.

Par. But now I pray you shew me what use there can be of Learning in unfolding difficult places in Scripture?

Min. The use of Learning will appear in three eminent instances:

1. In giving a right distinction of the several senses of Scripture.

2. In the right timing of the passages therein.

3. In applying of Scripture seasonably and properly, on each occasion.

Now as to the first, you are to understand that there are several senses in which the Scripture-words and phrases are to be variously understood and interpreted, as namely literal, moral, mystical, and tropical. Though these be hard words, yet I hope to make them easie in the explication of them by Scripture-instances. In the literal sense you understand Scripture according to the bare import of the words: The Moral is when the sense goes higher than the words, being back't by reason and the law of nature: The Mystical sense is that

which is still more hid, and by the designment of the Holy Ghost, looks further than either of the other.

I will now produce one Text, which includes in it all these three senses, it is in *1 Tim. 5. 18.* the words are these, *Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the corn.* The literal sense is, that every good man is merciful to his Beast; and that the poor Creature toyling for us, ought to have a maintenance from us. The moral sense, taken out of the principles of Equity, and the Law of Nature by reasonable Consequence, is, *That the labourer is worthy of his hire.* The Mystical sense (*viz.*) the still further intendment of that Law, was a Divine ordination, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel (*i.e.*) the Ministers of the Gospel ought to be provided for, *1 Cor. 9. 9, 12.*

Now as some Scriptures will bear a literal sense with the moral, and the mystical, there are yet other Scriptures that will not, therefore in the fourth place such Texts as these are to be interpreted *tropically.*

Par. What do you mean by that?

Min. Such a figurative expression, whereof there are several sorts, which you will meet with in the reading of the Scriptures; Some are *metaphorical*, which is a borrowed expression, when another thing is made use

use of to express our meanings by, and cannot be taken literally, as that of *John 15.1. I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman.* The Prophet *Isaiah* prophesying of the admirable effects of Christianity, useth these expressions, *Chap. 11. 6, 7, 8. The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child shall lead them; And the Cow and the Bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together: and the Lion shall eat straw like the Ox; and the sucking Child shall play on the hole of the Aspidochelone, and the weaned Child shall put his hand on the Cockatrice den.*

Do you suppose that this Scripture is to be understood literally, as if a time were coming, when there should be a perfect reconciliation among the Creatures, their natural antipathies being taken away? No, these are but so many *metaphorical* representations of the excellent temper of Christianity; that the doctrine thereof, will effect a real change in our natures: That that savage, waspish, crusty humour of our natural dispositions, shall by the Christian laws and the Spirit of Christ, be transformed even into the meekness and innocency of a Lamb. And when our Lord bids us put out and cut off our offending eyes and hands, he hath no design to provoke us to

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dismember our selves; no, 'tis our darling sins and beloved vices which he levels at.

Again, as some Scriptures are to be interpreted *metaphorically*; so others *allegorically*, which is by continuing of a Trope; and this you have in the case of *Hagar* and *Sarah*, *Sinai* and *Sion*, which the Apostle calls the two Covenants, and saith they are an Allegory, *Gal. 4. 24. &c.* to the Chapters end; for so far you will find the explication of the Allegory continued. Again, there are other Scriptures which must be interpreted by an *Hyperbole*, which is another kind of Trope or Figure; when the truth of the thing affirmed, lies not in the letters, but in the privilege of the phrase, as *John 21. 25. And there are also many other things which Jesus did; which if they should be written every one, I suppose that the World it self could not contain the Books that should be written.* Where the Evangelist takes a Rhetorical liberty, that he might with greater elegancy express, that our Saviour was not idle in this life, but marvellously busie and active in it.

* *Ανθρω-*

πομοίως.

Gen. 3. 8.

& 6. 6.

Psal. 11. 4.

& 44. 23.

Isa. 59. 1.

In other places God represents himself to us after the * manner of men, as attributing to himself eyes, ears, and hands, walking, sleeping, repenting, and the like: it being the great mercy of God in so revealing himself and his dispensations to mankind

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kind (that thereby he may accommodate himself to the understandings of men) in such expressions, as suit most with their weak capacities and common apprehensions: by which he may make the more sensible impressions on us, like to that Prophet, who shrunk himself into the proportions of that † Child whom he meant to re-vive.

*Deus lo-
quitur no-
bis lingua
filiorum
hominum,
a Jewish
Proverb.
† 1 Kings
17. 21.*

Par. What do you infer from all this discourse?

Min. The necessary use of Learning, lest we confound the senses of Scripture, and take that Allegorically which we ought to take literally, and that literally which we ought to take figuratively. And what disorder this may create, I leave to your self to judge.

After all these, there remains a necessity of being acquainted with such Histories, as give us a relation of those Rites, Opinions, Customes and Proverbs, in use among the Jews and neighbouring Nations, to which the Scriptures in many places have particular references, without the knowledge whereof 'tis impossible we should understand a Book of so great Antiquity, or read it with that judgment, estimation, relish and delight, as we should do, did we discern the references and allusions that in it are frequently made to them.

Par.

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Par. If you please we will pass to the next particular you told me of, (*viz.*) That there is great use of Learning now, for the right timing of Scripture, What mean you by that phrase?

Min. That is to observe to what period of time the Histories, and especially the prophecies in Scripture have a peculiar and proper relation; and if due care be not taken therein, the mischiefs that may arise from your want of circumspection, will be innumerable.

Par. Explain your meaning by some instance, and shew where any one Prophecy hath been mis-timed by the *Quakers*.

Min. What do you think of that famous Prophecy of *Joel*, so much abused by *Quakers*, *Joel* 2. 28. *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons, and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.* Which Prophecy they apply to this present Age, therefore they say, That the *Quakers* have an extraordinary Spirit, according to the prediction thereof.

Par. But have not the *Quakers* reason to time that Prophecy to this present Age, wherein we live? and do we not see the Prophecy fulfilled in them?

Min.

Min. I cannot tell how to undeceive you better than in the words of a Learned * Commentator upon that place : who tells * *Dr. Hammond.* us that *that* Prophecy was cited and applied by St. Peter, *Acts* 2. to the times of the † *ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις.* Gospel, *It shall come to pass afterward (or, † in the last dayes) saith God, that I will pour out my Spirit (or, || of my Spirit) upon all flesh : and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, || ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος σου.* your young men shall see visions : And also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids in those dayes will I pour out my Spirit (or, of my Spirit) and they shall prophecy. 'Whatsoever can be collected from this place to the benefit of the Pretenders, 'will receive a short and clear answer by 'considering the time to which this prediction (and the completion of it) belonged, 'and that is expressly *the last dayes*, in 'the notion wherein the Writers of the 'New Testament constantly use that phrase ; 'not for these dayes of ours, so far advanced 'toward the end of the world (which yet 'no man knows how far distant it still is) 'but for the time immediately preceding the 'destruction of the Jewish Polity, their City and Temple. That this is it, appears 'not only by the mention of *Sion*, and the 'destruction approaching it, in the beginning of that Chapter of *Joel*, which signifies it to belong to *Jerusalem* that then 'was ;

* *ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις.*

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' was ; but also by two further undeceivable evidences : 1. By the mention of the
 ' wonders (immediately subjoyn'd) in the
 ' heavens and the earth, &c. as forerunners
 ' of the great and terrible day of the Lord ,
 ' the same that had been before described in
 ' Joel v. 2. &c. and applyed by Christ in
 ' the very words, to this destruction of Jerusalem , Matth. 24. 29, 30. 2. By the
 ' occasion for which St. Peter produceth it,
 ' Acts 2. 14. the effusion of the Holy Ghost
 ' upon the Apostles, v. 2. 4. which , saith
 ' he, was no effect of drunkenness in them,
 ' but the very thing which was foretold by
 ' that place of Joel, before that great and notable day of the Lord, that was to fall upon that People to an utter destruction. This
 ' being a prediction of what should come before the destruction of Jerusalem, and the
 ' completion whereof was so visible and remarkable in that Age, to which by the
 ' Prophet it was assigned (and this as a peculiar character of those times wherein the
 ' Gospel was to be first propagated by this means, and to which it had a propriety, as
 ' a last act of God's miraculous and gracious oeconomy for the full conviction of
 ' this peoples sins, before they were destroyed) it must needs be impertinently and fallaciously applyed to any men or women ,
 ' old or young, of this Age, so distant from that to which it belonged, and so well provided

'vided for by the ordinary means, the settled Office of Ministry in Christ's Church, 'as to have no such need of extraordinary. So that they have no more right to charge God to perform this promise over again, than a Creditor hath reason to exact a sum of money by vertue of a cancel'd Bond.

The *Quakers* I perceive pretend to an interest in these Prophecies. But then why do not these pretenders to new lights speak with new tongues, heal diseases, raise the dead, and do other miraculous acts, according to the tenor of those Prophecies.

Par. But they will tell you of as great acts; for they gain many Profelites, and thereby enlarge the Kingdom of Christ.

Min. If counting numbers be the thing to establish the truth of their Religion, in all probability, they will renounce Christianity it self, and turn Mahometans, for *Mahomet* has more that follow him than Christ; Then wo be to that little flock to whom a Kingdom is promised.

Par. But what do you say to the third particular in order to applying Scripture seasonably and properly?

Min. I say, if a due regard be not had thereof, there is scarce that irregularity in the World which you may not make the Scripture to patronize, therefore saith the
Evan-

Evangelical Prophet *Isaiab*, cap. 50. 4. *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the Learned, to speak in due season.* And so *Prov.* 15. 23. *A word spoken in season is like Apples of gold in pictures of silver.*

A good thing improperly applyed, may be made, instead of good, the occasion of evil; * for good things do loose the grace of their goodness, when they are not in a good and convenient manner perform- ed.

* Zonarus
in Can. A-
post. 66.
Καλὸν ἔ-
στι καλῶς
γίνεσθαι.

Suppose a Carpenter frames a building with great Art and Skill, and makes a proper mortise for every tenon (as the terms are) when this building comes to be set up, if you place not the joynts aright, the whole building will be in disorder. So God Almighty, the wise Architect, has framed his Word to proper times, occasions, and emergencies; Now if you do not suit the Text to the occasion, to which it was originally framed, and to the season proper to it, you spoil all. Though the words be good, yet if the application be wrong, they will prove like *salt which hath lost its sa- vour.*

Suppose a Physician prepares a great many excellent remedies, there must be a due application, otherwise an antidote may prove a poyson; So the great Physician of Souls has prepar'd for all maladies their proper remedies, and if we expect any be-
nefit

nefit by them, we must make a seasonable application of them. And to make this more plain, you may consult *Psalms*. 91.11, 12. *For he shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy wayes, they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Should I say that in this Scripture is represented to us Gods especial providence over his servants, and whilst that I am performing my duty to God, either in his immediate service, or in an honest attendance on my lawful Calling, I may expect the Divine protection; in this sense I apply the Text seasonably and properly: But should I get upon the top of a Pinnacle, and cast my self down, upon confidence of this promise, that the Angels shall bear me up, then I wrest and misapply the Scripture, which no where gives encouragement to a desperate attempt: For it is written, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*; that is, thou shalt not tempt him to work a miracle by casting thy self down from a desperate Precipice, when the ordinary means of his Providence may effect thy preservation.

Par. What rule have you to prevent mistakes in this kind?

Min. Take this for one, when any Text hath a relation to a particular case, that Text must not stand for a general rule, but must be applied to a like occasion; for it's

Evangelical Prophet *Isaiah*, cap. 50. 4. *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the Learned, to speak in due season.* And so *Prov.* 15. 23. *A word spoken in season is like Apples of gold in pictures of silver.*

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a most grand fallacy, to draw an universal conclusion from particular premisses; take an instance of my meaning from 2 Cor. 9. 22. *I am made all things to all men*; Make this a general rule, and Christianity (which is the most pure Religion in the World) will from this Text be a sanctuary for all villany and impurity: For if I may be all things to all men, then may I lawfully comply with all the irregularities of whatsoever company I come in: But suit the Text to its proper occasion, and it imports only this, That all customs and constitutions of an indifferant nature, for the peace of the Church ought to be conformed unto.

As for the Holy Scriptures, they are the lively Oracles of God, and contain in them the words of eternal life; but in the Quakers impertinent application of them, they look like so many Jewels in a Swines snout, or like good liquor that is lost, by the badness of the vessel that contains it.

Having thus shewed you at large the first cause of the Scriptures being wrested (*viz.*) the want of Learning, I need say but little upon the other, the instability of mens minds.

Par. However, let me hear what you can say upon that subject.

Min. Little need be said, for 'tis no wonder if those, who are unlearned, (especially if they be bold and confident) be unstable,

stable, for it's *the empty cloud which is carried away with every wind*. Old truths ought to be most loved, but commonly they have the same fate with the *Manna* in the Wilderness, to be odious for their being old. It's the property of unstable men to have itching ears, and to heap up to themselves Teachers that may teach *placencia*, & speak unto them smooth things: if they hear of any new knack, they are in pain till they gratifie their fancy therewith, and with running from meeting to meeting, they raise and heat their fancies, and are commonly molded into that notion they hear last. I am sure 'tis a sad diagnostick that his stomach is out of order, that longs after all meat and drink he hears of. 'Tis likely enough, if the persons whom they so much admire, had but the stamp of authority upon their actions and discourses, they would be as much rejected, as now they are imbrac't and follow'd. And may we not suspect a further reason of their contempt of the publick Ordinances (*viz.*) that it is not the true Spirit of God, but of prejudice, opposition, and animosity, which separates them from our Congregations? Do they not mistake the Spirit of *Core* for the Spirit of God? However, when such men set their minds on running, they are like a Ship which sails without the conduct of her Pilot, the ruin whereof any one may see to be inevitable.

ble. Which gives me an occasion to mention the effect of all, which is *destruction to themselves.*

*Corruptio
optimi est
pessima.*

It has been well observ'd, that such things as have been most useful in their regularities, prove most dangerous in their abuse. Gods blessings perverted, are commonly sowred into the most imbitter'd provocations. The Scriptures are compared to a Sword, which will defend him that takes it by the proper handle, but this Sword is a *two-edged sword*, which will wound the hand of him that doth not manage it aright: 'Tis no wonder then we read of *damnable heresies*, which are the dire and miserable consequences of wresting Scripture. It's good Apostolical advice, *to hold fast the profession of faith without wavering*; a good rule to a fickle Age, wherein so many are apt to be led by those that flatter them most, against those that counsel them best. And I pray God they may consider hereof, before it be too late.

2 Pet. 2.1.

Heb. 10.
23.

Par. But before we pass from this subject, I pray resolve me this Query, Whether you do not mightily discourage the common people from reading the Scriptures, if so much learning be requisite for the understanding of them.

Min. If my words be rightly weighed, you can make no such inference from them,
for

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for though I say with St. Peter, that *some things are hard to be understood*, to exercise the deepest and sharpest apprehensions, and the greatest proficients; yet I have told you already, that all necessary points in them are plain and easie: insomuch, that the most learned need not be ashamed, nor the most ignorant be afraid to read them; but as for these, let them read them with this caution, that they be not too confident in adventuring to make their own interpretation of such hard places according to their fancy, interest, or prepossessions; but that they have recourse to their Pastors, whose lips preserve knowledge, and whose work and business it is, to resolve them in all such doubts and difficulties, as are of concernment to them.

*Deus in
Scripturis
quasi ami-
cus fami-
liaris lo-
quitur ad
cor docto-
rum & in
doctorum.
Aug.Ep.*

Mal.2. 7.

Par. I do esteem my self not a little ingaged to you for the pains you have taken with me; My request to you now is, that I may have your resolution concerning Tithes.

Min. I am very ready to hear what you have to object against them.

Par. I have had many scruples concerning them, and find those Scruples much augmented by a Book of *Ed. Burroughs*, called *A just and righteous Plea*, presented to the King and Council, wherein I find that to pay Tithes, is to deny Christ to be come in the flesh, and so consequently Anti-christian,

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christian, and that we may as well turn back to Circumcision, Sacrifices, and burnt Offerings, as to the payment of them.

Min. By what argument is this made good? the charge is heavy, and we may reasonably call for proof.

Par. He thus proves it; *Tithes are now not to be paid according to the first Covenant, neither is the first Priesthood to be upheld that once gave and received Tithes, now should we pay Tithes according to the first Covenant, and uphold any part of that Priesthood, which took Tithes, &c. then should we deny Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh.*

Min. I shall not trouble you with such reflections, as I may justly make upon the ignorance and confidence of your Author; nor of your own weakness and credulous temper, in being moved by such arguments: to which I now make my reply; wherein you may observe that *Burroughs* is as ignorant in the nature of the first Priesthood which took Tithes (which he saith is ended) as he and his Brethren are in the nature of the first and second Covenant, of which I have already given you an account.

If by the first Priesthood, he means that of *Aaron's*, then it will be apparent, that he hath presented to the King and Council a notorious fallity, by affirming it to be the first Priesthood; there being before him a Priest

Priest to whom *Levi* himself paid Tithes, *Heb. 7. 9.* Or if by the first Priesthood he means that of *Melchisedec's*, the falsity will be no less notorious in saying that Priesthood is ended, which Christ himself exerciseth for ever, *Heb. 7. 17.* So that the charge of Antichristianism will lye at the Revilers door.

Par. Wave this mistake, and reply to that assertion of his, *That you may as well turn to Circumcision, Sacrifices, and Burnt-offerings, as to the payment of Tithes.*

Min. To affirm that the Clergy now claims their Tithes, by vertue of the Ceremonial Law, is a most wretched untruth; for we disown all such titles to them.

Par. Then the question is, Whether Tithes are not purely Ceremonial? and so established by Christ.

Min. Tithes cannot be called purely Ceremonial, because paid by *Abraham* to *Melchisedec* four hundred years before the Law, and vowed two hundred years by *Jacob* before it was delivered.

That the exact Tenths of the Holy Land should be brought in kind to *Jerusalem*, and paid there, was Ceremonial, and confined to the legal dispensation. But that the Priest should have an honourable maintenance, is a right, founded not only in natural justice (as a due reward for his labour)

bour) but as a homage to God, whose honour and worship is concerned in his Office; and therefore not abolished by Christ: *These things you ought to have done*; for as God doth challenge part of our time for his service and worship, so also a share in our proprieties and substance for the maintenance of it.

Par. I wish you would more clearly take off the charge of Judaism which lyes upon the Clergy, by their pretences to Tithes.

Min. Should we challenge and receive our Tithes as they were due to the *Levites*, our Coffers would be much fuller than they are, and the impositions much heavier upon the people: for besides the Meat-offerings, Sin-offerings, Shake-offerings, Heave-offerings, and the Shewbread, as also of all Eucharistical Sacrifices, the breast and the shoulder, and the Offerings for Purification; I say, besides these, the Priests were to have the First-fruits of Wine, and Oyl, and Wool, *Deut.* 8.4. yea, and of all things else which the Earth brought forth for the use of man, the First-fruits of the Dough, *Numb.* 15. 20, 21. So that when all things were computed, there was not left five parts, instead of nine, to the owners. And therefore you being eased of the charge and trouble of all those payments and offertories to the Priests, which

which the Jews paid as supernumerary, over and above their Tithes, you have little reason to grudge the Gospel-Ministers that proportion allowed them by the Christian Laws, which is much short of what was allowed to the Legal Minister.

Par. I understand by what right the *Levites* demanded their Tithes, and the rest, namely by the Law of God ; but then by what Law of God do you demand your Tithes now under the Gospel ?

Min. Let me here tell you that those that insist upon the divine right of Tithes, derive them not from *Levi*, but *Melchisedec*.

Par. It was not the tithe of Hay and Corn that *Abraham* paid to *Melchisedec*, but the spoils of War.

Min. It's not material what the particulars were, out of which *Abraham* paid his Tithes, but whatever they were, he paid them as a Tithe, and *Melchisedec* received as a Priest. And if you consult the original, you will find that it was not a voluntary gift of *Abraham's*, but as a due received by *Melchisedec*, for the words would properly be rendred *he tithed Abraham*.

Δι' ἡμε-
τερας τὸν
Ἀβραάμ.

Par. That I may draw my matter into as few words as I can, I frame my argument thus ; If the Clergy of *England* now possessed of Tithes, can show a precept, where God has commanded them, or an

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example, where the Apostles did actually receive them, I shall be satisfied in the point, but if neither can be made good, then do not the Clergy with an ill conscience enjoy them?

Min. Your argument will appear very weak, till you make good the consequence of it.

Par. There can be no mistake in the consequence, for certainly precept or example in Holy Scripture must be the guide of all our actions.

Min. I will shew you the mistake, by your own way of arguing. It hath pleased God to bless you with a competent Estate; you challenge so many acres of ground in such a Field, and so many acres of meadow in such a place; part of which you enjoy in demise from your Landlord, and part you hold in fee, being the inheritance of your Ancestors and Family. Now to make you a good property in this Estate, you must shew either some positive Scripture for your right to hold the same, or an example from Christ or the Apostles, that they had Freeholds and Copyholds, or else if you cannot so do, will you not fall under the same condemnation you have past upon us?

Par. I shall soon discover your fallacy, by telling you, that I enjoy my estate as a temporal right.

Min.

Min. If then the consideration of a temporal right, be sufficient to satisfy your conscience in a temporal enjoyment, by the same reason I can hold my Tithes without any wound to my conscience.

Par. Do you call Tithes a temporal right?

Min. Is not that temporal, which contributes to my temporal subsistence? but to put the thing out of all doubt, our Laws have made them a Free-hold.

Par. If Tithes are temporal rights, how come you to call them spiritual preferments?

Min. All Tithes are not so called: because all impropriations are held in a Lay-fee, and others are called spiritual preferments, not in respect of the profits, but the persons who are capable of them, and therefore are they vulgarly called spiritual preferments, because enjoyed by spiritual persons.

But I pray let me ask you what you have to shew for your estate?

Par. I will answer you upon condition you will resolve me a like question.

Min. Agreed.

Par. I have a good Deed. Now what have you to shew for your Glebe and Tithes.

Min.

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Min. I have a good Terrier, and Endowment.

Par. Prove that Terrier and Endowment to be right by the Law of God.

Min. So I will, when your Deed is made good by the Law of God.

Par. It's sufficient that my Deed is approved by the Laws of the Land.

Min. So 'tis sufficient that our Tithes are settled by the same Laws: When you have said all you can against them, they will be found to be as equitable as any other property whatsoever: And if you judge us unjust, in taking of the tenth, by the same argument you will condemn yourselves of nine times greater injustice for taking of the remainder.

The sum of all will amount to this, that Tithes are due by either Divine or Human right, or both; If we enjoy them by a Divine right (as we do, at least a Maintenance in the general) you kick against the pricks in with-holding them; If by Human right, you will involve your property in the destruction of ours, because none of the Laity can shew any other right to their temporal properties, than Human Laws; And if we have both Divine and Humane right to our Tithes, as they are a settled Maintenance, we enjoy them by the strongest title in the world; So that the

Quakers

Quakers will hereby be proved to be no better than robbers of God in withholding them.

Par. Before we proceed any further in this controversie, there is one material point to be discussed, which will bring the business of Tithes to a speedy issue; and 'tis this: Do you suppose that temporal Authorities, have sufficient power to establish temporal rights?

Min. I suppose you will think it a needless question to be askt, Whether the *Quakers* own any Temporal Authority or no (though many of their practices may justify the absurdity of such a Query) yet I shall presume they do; for Government is so essential to the well-being of the World, that even a private Family, cannot subsist, unless some undertake the conduct of it: and if a Kingdom have no Laws, so that every one may do what is right in his own eyes, such a Kingdom must needs be brought to desolation, through the abundance of divisions that will be therein. Yea, Christ himself hath so far honoured Government, that he submitted himself not only to the private authority of his Parents, but also paid homage to the publick Government, as you may see in that remarkable instance, in giving Tribute, *Matth. 17.* though he was put to the expence of a ^{27.} miracle for it. And Government is so far

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far approved by God, that we are expressly commanded to be subject to it, and to obey them that have the rule over us, *Hebr. 13.* And no less punishment than damnation is threatned to them that resist, *Rom. 13. 2.*

Par. I believe that what you say is Gospel, and so I'll assure you the *Quakers* do own Authority and Magistracy to be of Divine Institution.

Min. Now I shall answer your Question, and that in the affirmative (*viz.*) that Temporal Authorities have power to establish Temporal Rights, and this will evidently appear, when it is considered that our Saviour never so medled in Temporal matters, as to determine them as a Judge. When two Brothers came to him for judgment in a Temporal matter, he absolutely refused, and disclaimed all such power; saying, *Who made me a Judge?* &c. He declared his Kingdom not to be of this World, he took not upon him the judicial cognizance of any offence whatsoever. He left the woman taken in Adultery, and all other offenders to the ordinary course of Law. His design was not to diminish the Authority of Princes, but to fix in the hearts of men the true principles of holiness and goodness, and to rule there as a Spiritual Prince; whilst in Temporals he left them to a due obser-

*Non ejus-
dem natu-
ræ cujus a-
liorum sunt
regna, cæ-
lestis scili-
cet, non
terrestris
ingenii.
Grot.*

observance of the Laws of their respective Countries. It was upon this stumbling block that the Jews fell, supposing the Messiah should be a Temporal Prince.

Par. What do you infer from all this ?

Min. The inference I draw from hence, is, That in Temporal affairs, an Argument drawn from a Temporal Authority (where the thing is equitable and reasonable) is a good and convincing Argument, and that in two respects.

1. Because Christ having disclaimed all exercise of Authority in Temporal matters, there is now, no other way of determining them than by recourse to the Civil Powers.

2. He hath so far confirmed these Powers, that he has commanded a severe obedience to them; *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers, Rom. 13. 1. Fear God; Honour the King, 1 Pet. 2. 17.* and a great number more of the like importance. And it's very observable, that those Powers they were then to be subject to, and the King they were to honour, were heathenish and tyrannical; which teacheth us, that Dominion is not founded in grace, and that the demerits of Princes do not absolve Subjects from their duty of obedience.

Par.

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Par. But suppose a tyrannical Power should give you that which is anothers Right and Property, can you enjoy the same with a good Conscience, because you have the same from a Temporal Authority?

Min. You mince my words, for I do not say in every case a Temporal Authority can create a right to a Temporal Interest, but in such cases only as are equitable and reasonable.

Par. Hold you to this Principle, and your cause is lost.

Min. I shall not shrink a tittle from it.

Par. Shew me then what reasonable and equitable right you have to the tenth part of another mans Estate and Property.

Min. If Tithes be another mans Estate and Property, the case will be clear against me; but this is begging of the Question, therefore I am ready to prove that Tithes are mine, not his, from whom I receive them.

Par. Then the Question will be here, How you came by that Property in the Tithes you claim as your own?

Min. In order to the satisfying of this scruple, I shall not insist on the Divine right of Tithes, and the lawfulness of receiving, from *Melchisedec's* Priesthood
(to

(to whom they were paid) which is an unchangeable Priesthood, but shall ground my discourse upon that which is owned by all, that will yield to the Authority of Scripture or Reason, viz. that Maintenance in general to the Ministers of the Gospel is just, reasonable, and established by a Divine Authority.

Par. Pray let me hear where the Gospel has appointed that Maintenance you speak of.

Min. The Apostle hath done the thing sufficiently, and cloathed it with words, so emphatical, that you shall not meet with more briskness, and sharpness of style elsewhere. See 1 Cor. 9. if you read his words there from *verse 6.* to the *12th.* you may find St. Paul quoting the Law of Moses, and pressing the reasonableness of it, *verse 9.* *It is written in the Law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn; Doth God take care for Oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? &c.* that is, he appeals to them, whether they that labour for us in the Word and Doctrine, be not by that Law designed to be much more regarded by us, and to have a Maintenance from us? *verse 11.* *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?* that is, have a temporal reward for our spiritual

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Spiritual service: *verse 7. Who goeth a warfare at his own charges?* that is, spends his own Patrimony when he is on the Publick service; is it reasonable that we should plant your Spiritual Vineyard, and not eat of the fruit of your Temporal Vineyard? Shall we feed the Flock of Christ, and not eat of the Milk of the Flock? And when he writes to the *Galatians*, he reminds them of this particular: *Gal. 6.*

'Eν μόνῳ 6. *Let him that is taught in the Word*
ἀγαθῶς. *communicate to him that teacheth in all good things* (or in all his goods, as the Original imports) where the Apostle enjoins us to minister to the natural necessity of those that minister to our Spiritual necessity, and all this according to God's Ordinance, *That they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel,* 1 Cor. 9. 14.

Par. I acknowledge these to be the Apostle's words, and the reasonableness of them; but this is no other kind of Maintenance than what the poor may require of us, and which a voluntary contribution may answer; and such a Maintenance as this the Apostles had, and we allow the Preachers of the Gospel.

Min. That the poor have a right to such a provision from us as may be a supply to their necessities, is evident from *Prov. 3. 27.* where it's called their *due and right*:

right: and *Alms-giving* is * elsewhere * *ἑλεη-*
called Righteousness. Now suppose some *μοσων*,
 charitably disposed persons, should give *δικαιο-*
 certain Lands and Tenements to every *συνη.*
 Parish, for the Maintenance of the Poor, *Pf. 112. 9.*
 and the same is confirm'd by the Law: *Pr. 11. 18.*
 because we do not meet with any Com-
 mand in Scripture to set apart such Lands,
 or that any did actually entail them to
 such uses; have therefore the Poor no
 right to those Lands, and are the Te-
 nants under no Obligation to pay their
 respective rents? That our case is the same
 will be evident to every understanding
 man; So that by the same Argument
 you endeavour to destroy Tithes, you
 will destroy also all the Hospitals in *Eng-*
land.

Par. You start from your Question,
 which is not concerning Maintenance, but
 Tithes: You say that they that preach the
 Gospel ought to live of it; that is, it
 takes care for the livelyhood of those
 that are the Preachers of it; but where
 doth it appoint Tithes for that lively-
 hood?

Min. If you will grant that Mainte-
 nance in general is due by the tenor of the
 Gospel, you will sufficiently justify Tithes
 from all the idle cavils which are brought
 against them.

L

Par.

Par. How so?

Min. The Gospel, you hear, commands a Maintenance be provided for the Ministry, and the Civil Powers, and Nursing Fathers of the Church, have set out Tithes for that Maintenance; so that if Tithes were not due by a Divine Appointment, they are now due, by a voluntary dedication of them.

Par. How does any such voluntary dedication appear?

Min. You need not scruple this point, would you but give your self the pains of consulting Antiquaries, or Church Histories, especially that famous Charter of King *Ethelwolf*, set down at large by *Ingulp*; where you will find the whole History of the thing, to the full satisfaction of any, whose prejudices do not obstruct the free use of their Reason.

Par. I am apt to believe what you say, without any further inquisition into the thing, but then I suppose they were given in a blind and superstitious zeal, which makes all void to us.

Min. This is another mistake; For Tithes being given to God for the Maintenance of his Ministry, no blemish in the dedication of them can alter their Property. To make my assertion good, a parallel case in Scripture shall be produced.

duced. That which comes most near it, is the case of the Two hundred and fifty men who offered Incense: Yet there was a vast difference between them: The Two hundred and fifty offered in a stubborn, rebellious manner, and these in an ignorant zeal (as some suppose, but we do not grant;) But that which will give us most light into our present case, are the Censers which were so offer'd, which you will find, notwithstanding that damnable sin committed in the consecration of them, yet because they were offer'd to God, they were not to be alienated to common uses. *Numb. 16. 37. Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the Priest, that he take up the Censers out of the burning, &c. for they are hallowed.* From hence you may learn how dangerous a thing it is to meddle with any thing that hath been given to God. For you see the reason given why the Censers were not alienable, was because they were hallowed by being offered before the Lord. Therefore saith a Learned Rabbi, they were unlawful for a common use, because they had made them Vessels of Ministry.

*Factum
valet, quod
fieri non
debit.
Rabbi So-
lomon
Iarchi.*

L 2

Par.

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Par. I have often heard that Tithes were given at the first by the Pope, and therefore not to be endured in a Nation, that hath renounced all communion with him.

Min. This I know is one of the popular Arguments of the *Quakers* to cast a mist before the eyes of their ignorant Followers; but suppose it had been so, they would not have been less hallowed than the Two hundred and fifty Censers were, and so consequently the alienation of them no less impious; yet I deny your assertion, that Tithes had their institution from Popery; And I have good grounds for what I say, for Tithes were settled upon the Church, before Popery had made her encroachments in it. For Popery is not of that antiquity (as some do vainly and falsely boast;) Though they shew their old shoes and mouldy bread, yet upon a strict enquiry, they will be found to be but so many Gibeonitish Cheats, and that their tenents and corruptions are not of that antiquity as is pretended by them.

*See the
Advice to
the Roman
Catholicks.*

However, that you may have a distinct answer to your Question, give me first your notion of Popery.

Par.

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Par. I call all such Doctrines and Practises Popery, as are held in the Church of *Rome*.

Min. That this is a wrong notion of Popery, will be very evident, if you consider that the Doctrine of the blessed Trinity, the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord is believed in the Church of *Rome*.

Par. I cannot but confess all this to be true. Then I pray do you tell me what is Popery?

Min. I cannot give you a more brief and true account of Popery, than this, That it is such Doctrines and Superstitious practises, which by the corruption of time, have prevailed in the Church of *Rome*, contrary to the true, ancient, Catholick and Apostolick Church. Where we agree in any points of Religion, there is no more reason to call us Papists, than there is to call them Protestants. The *Socinians* maintain the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, the Church of *England* doth the same; shall we therefore be branded with Socinianism? By which instance you may see the *Quakers* folly in their charging Tithes with Popery. But to make it more clear, do you think that *Cranmer*, *Hooper*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Taylor*,
L 3 ler,

ler, and Bradford were inclinable to Popery?

Par. I suspect them not in the least, for they sealed their detestation of it with their blood, and were eminent Martyrs for the Protestant Cause in the bloody dayes of Queen Mary.

Min. Then I hope you will have a better opinion of Tithes, since these in their time were receivers of them: As also of the Common-Prayer-Book, since some of those good men did assist in the compiling of it.

Par. Hereafter, for their sakes, Tithes shall never be reputed Popish by me: yet methinks you have not proved yet the Divine institution of them.

Min. Is it not sufficient that I have proved Maintenance in general a Divine institution, and that Tithes have been set out for that Maintenance; but that you may be eased in this scruple, let me tell you a story: There happen'd to be a publick disputation in Germany, before the Elector of Saxony concerning Tithes: one side vigorously maintaining that they were due by the Laws of God, arguing that Tithes were paid to the Priesthood of Melchisedec, and so consequently that Tithes were still in force with the Priesthood; further arguing, that no Law is abolished whilst the reason of it
conti-

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continues still in force, now there is as much reason for Tithes in the times of the Gospel, as there was in the times of the Law: And lastly, they argued from that Analogy which the Apostle makes between the Levites Maintenance under the Law, and the Ministers Maintenance under the Gospel, *even so bath the Lord ordained, &c.* The other side as briskly maintaining that Tithes were due only by the Laws of the Land. When they had all spent their Arguments, the Elector himself gave the determination thus, One party I perceive (saith he) is for the Divine, another for the Human right of Tithes; yet both sides agree and acknowledge them to be a *right*, therefore according to my duty, to maintain *right*, I am bound to justify and uphold Tithes.

1 Cor. 9.
14.

After all this out-cry against Tithes, do the *Quakers* think the paying and receiving of them to be a sin?

Par. Do you think that all this stir could have been, if they thought it not a sin to demand and receive Tithes?

Min. What is sin?

Par. The transgression of the Law, 1 John 3. 4.

L 4

Min.

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Min. Now shew me a Law against Tithes; If it be the transgression of a Divine Law, shew the Text; if of an Human Law, shew the Statute. 'Tis the Opponents part to prove; and if we be faulty, you must shew wherein, and the Accuser must make good his Charge.

Par. You are very faulty in intimating that the *Quakers* can produce no Texts against Tithes, for you cannot be ignorant that they have produced several; as that in *Jeremiah* 5.31. *The Prophets prophesie falsely, and the Priests bear rule by their Means.* *Isaiah* 65. 11. *Every one for his gain from his quarter.*

Min. I must confess I have seen these in many of their Books, and by some *Quakers* they have been urged to my self; but when I reflect hereupon, I cannot forbear concluding that they discover not only a sottish ignorance, but downright dishonesty herein.

Par. Make good your charge.

Min. Can there be more sottish ignorance, than to apply *Jeremiah's* words either against Tithes, or the Maintenance of the Ministry under the Gospel? and that I may manifest their folly, let me tell you a story parallel to this case; Two men disputing when Guns had their

their first invention; One said that a certain Monk (as he was making some Chymical Experiment) accidentally found out Powder, &c. and consequently Guns must come after: The other dated their original to be of as long a standing as *David's* dayes, because he saith in one *Psalm*, *O Lord, I have kept thine Ordinances*: which was impossible for him to have kept, had there not been Guns then.

*Bertholdus
Swart.
Heyl. Cos.
lib. 3 p. 39.*

Par. Why do you bring in here this idle story?

Min. To convince you that the *Quakers* use the Prophets words as idly, and as little to the purpose: For it is as proper to say, that *Ordinances* signifie Guns in the Text quoted, as to say that *Means* in the Prophet's sense signifie Tithes, Maintenance, or any other Estate. *The Priests bear rule by their Means*; that is, by the means or procurements of those false Prophets, or by reason of them. And *Solomon* tells us, that *by means of an whorish woman a man is brought to beggary*; not by reason of her Estate, but by her means, *i.e.* by reason of her inticements, it so comes to pass.

Par. I must confess this is an oversight, but wherein doth their dishonesty appear?

Min.

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Min. That will be as apparent as their ignorance; They say Tithes are unlawful, why then is it said, *Mal. 3. 8. Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me: but ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? in Tithes and Offerings.*

Par. You are to conceive, that *Malachi* lived during the continuance of the Law, and *Burrough's* will yield that Tithes then were of *Gods commandment, of heavenly ordination, &c.* What then signifies the Text in *Malachi*, for Tithes in the time of the Gospel?

Min. Here it is, that *Quakers* discover their dishonesty, in acknowledging Tithes of an *heavenly ordination* under the old Testament, and yet condemn them by producing Texts out of the Prophets who lived under the same dispensation, which they knew did both allow and command Tithes.

Par. I must confess I am not furnisht with a Reply to this; how well soever others may.

Min. I told you before, that Tithes and other Church Revenues have been settled by those that were actually seized of them in Law; now if the *Quakers* can prove from the Laws of God, or right reason, that it's not lawful for every one to do what he will with his own, and consequently, that he may
not

not settle Tithes, Lands, or Moneys upon the Clergy, then they do something to the purpose; if not, they do but beat the Air with empty words, and you have reason to look upon them (as indeed they are) a company of Cheats and Impostors.

Par. All this while you do not consider that Tithes are a great oppression to all sorts of people concern'd in the payment of them.

Min. So all Tenants may as reasonably say; that the payment of Rent to their respective Landlords, is a National burthen and oppression.

Par. There is not the same reason; for every Landlord will tell you that he (or some for him) purchased their respective Tenements upon a valuable consideration.

Min. But the main question is behind, Whether they purchased the Tithes with those Tenements, if not, where is your grievance?

Par. Do you suppose then that Tithes are no grievance?

Min. None at all, neither to the Landlord nor Tenant.

Par. Prove this,

Min.

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Min. You cannot be ignorant that every Purchaser buys his Land according to the Rent it gives, and every Tenant payes Rent according to the conveniencies he enjoys. Now if a Tenant stand charged with Tithes, Taxes, chief Rents, and the like, these are computed to every Occupant, according to which he models his Rent: and though he pays these dues and duties (as they are called) yet are they no inconvenience to him, because he pays less Rent in consideration thereof. Neither is it any inconvenience to the Landlord, because his purchase was according to that Rent, and the Land he bought, he knew (or might have known) was lyable to these charges.

Par. Here must needs be some mistake, for were I to sell my Estate, I could not have so much for it by a considerable sum, because it stands charged with the payment of Tithes: And if this be no grievance, judge you.

Min. But pray satisfie me whether you gave not as considerable a sum less upon this consideration, when you bought it; if so, will you sell what you never bought? Where then is that intolerable grievance, which I perceive is no where to be found, but in the mouths of Fanaticks, and ill affected people?

Par.

Par. But I pray you resolve me thus much, where the Apostles had Tithes, Glebes, and the like?

Min. I confess the Apostles had not the Tithes in their dayes, and you ought not to bring this for an Argument, because they could not have them if they would; for they were not only persecuted by the Civil Authority, but the *Levites* themselves were in possession of them; which they kept during the continuance of their Nation and Temple. Besides, you ought to consider, that Tithes, or any other fixed Maintenance, was utterly inconsistent with their unfixed state of Life; being to preach the Gospel in all Nations, they became an improper Maintenance for them; and besides, you are to consider, that the Apostles needed them not, for as they had their Gifts, so their Maintenance by a miraculous Providence. *Luke 22. 35. And he said unto them, when I sent you without Purse, and Scrip, and shooes, lacked ye any thing? and they said, Nothing.*

Par. Ought not you then to be in all things, as were the Apostles?

Min.

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Min. If you conclude that we must be in all things, as were the Apostles, then must you of the Laity, now do as the Laity did then, who *sold their possessions, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, Acts 4.* And I can argue the one, with the same reason you can the other. But I have one Query, wherein I shall desire your answer, Whether the *Quakers* think it lawful to pay the King his Revenues?

Par. You know the *Quakers* willingly pay the King all his dues, which they do for Conscience sake.

Min. Therefore, for Conscience sake, they ought to pay us our Tithes, 1. because the King commands it; 2. because he hath so considerable a Revenue out of them, I mean the First-fruits and Tenths, which is one of the fairest Flowers belonging to the Crown. Now how can we pay the King his dues out of our Tithes, if we receive them not? So that in becoming enemies to the Clergies right, the *Quakers* are indeed enemies to the King's rights, by which the Government is upheld and supported.

Par.

Par. But do you not think it a sad thing, that the poorest person should be as lyable as the richest to the payment of Tithes?

Min. This is no more injustice, than for a poor man to pay Rent to his Landlord; and the charge might as well, nay much more, reach the Priests under the Law, as the Clergy in the time of the Gospel; and it's well known that the most poor and needy are no sufferers by the payment of Tithes, but rather gainers; for by this means, they find that relief, which they could not have if it were otherwise.

Par. But are not the Ministers, that receive Tithes, Hirelings; and do they not sell the Word of God, and make merchandize of the souls of their people?

Min. Do you call the receiving of their rights, a selling of their peoples souls? what a wretched uncharitableness is this; You know the King has twelve Judges, who are to moderate and determine betwixt party and party, and these have an honourable allowance from the *Exchequer*, will you therefore say that they are Hirelings, and sell Justice? and is not ours the same case? Is it not said, *Luke 10. 7. The Labourer is worthy of his hire?* Is it not then very improper

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proper to upbraid Ministers with the name of Hirelings, when their Salary is called hire?

Par. I perceive you do think that the Quakers do most injuriously stile you Hirelings; yet the Covetousness of the Clergy hath given us occasion to fear, that bereave you of your preferments, and you would soon abandon your Profession.

Min. I hope many of us can appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that we embraced the Ministry upon better grounds than Temporal Interests. And do not the Quakers, and other enemies of the Clergy, rashly usurp God's Prerogative, in judging of mens secret affections and intentions, and charging them with such things, as none but God himself can have inspection into? And tho the Secular care of some of the Clergy, for the maintenance of their Families, have been excessive; yet what doth this prove against the Ministry it self, or against other Ministers, who principally intending and endeavouring the salvation of the Souls committed to their charge, do in the mean time both receive, and imploy their Tithes with a good Conscience, to none but necessary and charitable uses? I pray you therefore, ask your own Conscience, Whether it were likely to be Reason, or rather Envy, that drew up this Charge against us.

Par. But I had almost forgot to demand
of

of you, for what reason the Quakers should pay their tithes, when by their separation they have no benefit of your Ministry?

Min. The Minister is not to blame for their separation, or lack of that benefit, but desires they would enjoy it, while he is attending his Office. Shall then their publick contempt of Gods Ordinances, give them a priviledge to invade another mans right and property? and because they neglect their duty, shall therefore our Free-hold suffer? If our preferments were precarious, or did we wholly depend on the good will of our people for what we enjoy, your Argument then would have a better face; but as for our tithes they are ancient settled maintenances, and therefore we look upon our selves to be no more obliged to the people for the payment of them, than a Land-lord is to his Tenant for the payment of his Rent, as I have proved to you before.

Par. I must confess my self to have lived under a mistake in these things: But I have another thing to tell you, which has a long time been a great offence to me; and that is to see Clergy-men go to Law for their Dues, and sometimes for small and inconsiderable sums, to the great dishonour of their Function, and Reproach of Religion it self.

Min. If it be their dues they sue for, then the recovering of them by Course of Law, (when fair means have proved fruitless) will have no injustice in it; so that indeed you misplace the Crime, which is not in him that brings the Action, but in those who have given just occasion for it. The High-way-thief may as well implead the Justice of an Hue and Cry,

as the Quakers such a lawful Prosecution.

Whereas you say, The Action is sometimes for an inconsiderable sum, The less the sum is, the less excuse men have for the Non-payment of it. If a Noble man (be his Patrimony never so large) sue for the smallest Chief-rent belonging to his estate, it's thought neither injustice nor uncharitableness in him so to do; because thereby he does but secure his Inheritance. Now a Clergy-man in suing, though for his smallest dues, hath not only as good a right, but a more noble end; because it is for the securing of that, which is not so much his own, as Gods Title, and dedicated to his service to all generations; And therefore the Incumbent upon each Benefice is obliged in Conscience *entirely* to preserve God's and the Churches Right, and that not only for himself, but for his Successors to all Posterity. This therefore appearing thus to be his duty, is by you injuriously accused for Covetousness, Oppression, or Uncharitableness, (it being the greater uncharitableness in you to judge so) for as for those in his Parish who are truly needy and in distress, he may, notwithstanding this, relieve them according to his ability, in such ways and seasons, as his discretion shall see most expedient, without yielding up any thing of the Churches dues to those who do wilfully either deny, or neglect to pay them.

Par. But the main question is behind, Whether there be any occasion at all which may justify going to Law?

Min. You cannot suppose that a Nation can subsist without Government, neither can you suppose a Government without Laws: And of what signification are

are Laws, where men are denied the use and benefit of them? Laws are designed for the exercise of distributive justice, to help them to right that suffer wrong: and thereby to be a hedge and fence to every mans right and property: Therefore going to Law (upon a just Action) is no more, than making an honest appeal to the Government for remedy, which cannot be unlawful; till Government it self be proved so.

Par. I should approve of your discourse as very reasonable, did it not contradict the Apostle's in 1 Cor. 6.1. *Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to Law, before the unjust, and not before the Saints?*

Min. You mistake the Apostle; For first you must not think that either that passage of the Apostle, or any other part of the word of God, doth contradict Right Reason, or prohibit whatever is so requisite to the relief of the common and evident necessities of Mankind.

2. Other Scriptures do both allow and establish secular Government, and enjoin obedience to the Civil Powers, even to those that were Heathen, and call them *God's Ordinance*, Rom. 13. 1, 2. and command Magistrates to prosecute with all diligence and integrity all Acts of publick justice, 2 Chron. 19. 6, 7. Esa. 1. 17. And this implies the warrantableness of going to Law; for how shall injur'd persons be righted and defended by the Magistrate, if it be not lawful for them to bring their Causes before him, that is, to go to Law?

3. If you read on in that Discourse of the Apostle, you will find that the fault he reproves in the *Corinthians* is not all going to Law upon necessary and just occasions, but their bringing their private quarrels and disorders, *before the unjust*, that is, before the Unbelievers (which were the Heathen and Infidel-Judges) as he interprets himself in *v. 6.* *But brother goeth to Law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.* Which would have been to the scandal and reproach of Christianity among those who hated it, and who would improve such occasions to bring it into greater derision. And he exhorts them *v. 7.* rather to take a great deal of wrong, and to suffer themselves to be defrauded, (*viz.* in their private rights) than thus to go to Law one with another, to expose their Christian Profession to so open Contempt, and to give occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme.

But fourthly, Though the Apostle there forbid all such unbrotherly contentions, and bringing them before Infidel-Judges; yet he there (if you mark) appoints them a Judicature, before which they might lawfully bring their reasonable and just Complaints, that is, a Christian Judicature, consisting of *Believers*, *v. 1.* And exhortates with them sharply for not having appointed such a Court among themselves, before whom wronged persons might bring their Causes pertaining to this life, *v. 2, 3, 4, 5.* While therefore we live under a Christian Prince governing us by Christian Laws, and appointing us Courts consisting of Christian Judges, we cannot suppose our selves to be in the fore-cited Scripture forbidden to make application to them in cases just and necessary.

Par.

Par. I have given you diligent attention, and cannot but thank you for the satisfactory account you have given me, for I must needs acknowledge my self convinced by you of the unreasonableness of my scruple, and of taking any Scripture in such a sense, as makes void all Law and Government: But when I come in a Quakers Meeting, I fear, new doubts will arise, and when I hear them speak such things as I cannot answer, I am apt to conclude their Arguments to be unanswerable.

Min. If so: then you have reason to observe in your self such an unstableness of mind, as is common to the vulgar; no question but your wavering mind would be under the same perplexities, did you frequent the meetings of other Separatists. A *Jesuite*, *Socinian*, *Pelagian*, nay, A *Turk* or *Jew*, might bring such arguments, in vindication of their respective Heresies and Tenents, as might puzzle you to give a solution to; would you therefore conclude them all in the right? If you hear the Quakers bring such reasons in vindication of their tenents and ways, as your self cannot answer, will you conclude they are unanswerable? And because you know not a way to *Cbina* and *Japan*, will you therefore suppose, there are no such Countries, at least no way to them? The consideration of this instability of yours, should teach you,

1. Humility, not to look upon your self as a person fit to trust to your own judgment, not to be confident in your own opinion, nor to lean to your own understanding, *Prov. 3. 5.*

2. Pru-

2. Prudence, to withdraw your self wholly from the Meetings of those, by whose Sophistries your judgment is in most danger to be perverted, and to be carried away from those good Principles you have already recover'd, and of the soundness and reasonableness whereof you have already confess'd your self convinced and satisfied. For to be led away by a gadding humor to every Conventicle and irregular Meeting, is a presumption, which may provoke God to withdraw his protection from you, and to give you up to a spirit of delusion, which makes it very necessary to advise you to keep out of harms way, and the reach of so taking an Infection.

And 3. it is hence fit and seasonable to exhort you to be willing to be taught, and to that end to have recourse unto pious and sober men, especially Ministers of the Gospel, who, being by their education and calling, separated to Study and Devotion, are the fittest persons to advise you and resolve your scruples, they being such as, by your own experience and acknowledgment, have administer'd to you the most rational satisfaction. You are ready to consult a Physician in order to your health, and to take the advice of a Lawyer for the settlement of your estate, and methinks in matters of Religion and Conscience, a Divine will be no less fit to be consulted with. *The Priests*

Mal. 2: 7. *lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.* And in case of doubts our Church adviseth you to consult either your own,

* *Exhort to the
Communion.*

or some other discreet and learned Minister of Gods word, &c. * And when
you

you have compared the Discourses of the Quakers and the Ministers of our Church together, and weigh'd them well, and consider'd them in your hearts; I doubt not but you will judge our Doctrine to be in your Conscience most agreeable to right reason, and to make most to the honour of God, and the promoting of godliness, righteousness and sobriety, wherein the sum of Religion consists. *Tit. 2. 12.*
In which things you will find the Doctrine of our Church far to exceed the new upstart tenents of the Quakers.

Par. You cannot call their Doctrines new, when they are the same which the Primitive Christians had in the Apostles days.

Min. You may easily perceive this to be a manifest untruth: For you know the Primitive Christians were quite different from the Quakers; They did not contemn the two great Ordinances of the Gospel, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, but with due veneration received both, as I am ready to make appear at large, when there is occasion for it. The Primitive Christians had Bishops and Deacons to govern and teach them, and when they had them did not revile them, as do the Quakers; And these were ordained to their Functions by prayer and imposition of hands. The Primitive Christians had no Women teachers, being observant of Saint Paul's injunctions, who said in plain words, that it was a shame for a woman to speak in the Church, *1 Cor. 14. 35.* The Primitive Christians had no silent Meetings, as the Quakers have, and when you hear again of any more such, pray ask them, how reasonable it is for them to call
Preach

Preaching Ministers dumb dogs. The Primitive Christians did not contemptuously call the Temple,

† See Psal. 74. where you will find them called (in the old Translation, v. 9.) the Houses of God, and (in the new, v. 8.) the Synagogues of God; being dedicated to his Worship and Service.

nor the † Synagogues, nor houses of Prayer, Steeple-houses; but resorted to them to teach the people, and perform their Devotions. Thus did our Saviour *Joh. 18. 20. Luk. 4. 16.* and so did the Apostles *Act. 2. and cap. 13. 5.* But it

may be made evident that 'tis not the Primitive Christians, but the Scribes and Pharisees whom the Quakers do imitate, who place Religion in external Observances, while they neglect the weightier things of the Law.

Par. I could have been glad we had time to have debated these last particulars more fully, concerning the Quakers Non-conformity to the Primitive Church.

Min. So should I; And shall hereafter be ready to bestow my pains herein, as Providence shall give occasion and assistance. In the mean time I must refer the success of these present endeavours and Counsels I have bestowed on you, to your careful remembrance, and impartial consideration, and to the blessing of God, who only is able to lead you into all Truth, to whose grace I commit you, and heartily bid you Farewell.

F I N I S.

